

PD ROMANCE

He and She

by Anon.

HE.--To Hatsúse's vale I'm come,
To woo thee, darling, in thy home;
But the rain rains down apace,
And the snow veils ev'ry place,
And now the pheasant 'gins to cry,
And the cock crows to the sky:--
Now flees the night, the night hath fled,
Let me in to share thy bed!

SHE.--To Hatsúse's vale thou'rt come,
To woo me, darling, in my home:--
But my mother sleeps hard by,
And my father near doth lie;
Should I but rise, I'll wake her ear;
Should I go out, then he will hear:--
The night hath fled! it may not be,
For our love's a mystery!

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Sun Dried

by Edna Ferber

There come those times in the life of every woman when she feels that she must wash her hair at once. And then she does it. The feeling may come upon her suddenly, without warning, at any hour of the day or night; or its approach may be slow and insidious, so that the victim does not at first realize what it is that fills her with that sensation of unrest. But once in the clutches of the idea she knows no happiness, no peace, until she has donned a kimono, gathered up two bath towels, a spray, and the green soap, and she breathes again only when, head dripping, she makes for the back yard, the sitting-room radiator, or the side porch (depending on her place of residence, and the time of year).

Mary Louise was seized with the feeling at ten o'clock on a joyous June morning. She tried to fight it off because she had got to that stage in the construction of her story where her hero was beginning to talk and act a little more like a real live man, and a little less like a clothing store dummy. (By the way, they don't seem to be using those pink-and-white, black-mustachioed figures any more. Another good simile gone.)

Mary Louise had been battling with that hero for a week. He wouldn't make love to the heroine. In vain had Mary Louise striven to instill red blood into his watery veins. He and the beautiful heroine were as far apart as they had been on Page One of the typewritten manuscript. Mary Louise was developing nerves over him. She had bitten her finger nails, and twisted her hair into corkscrews over him. She had risen every morning at the chaste hour of seven, breakfasted hurriedly, tidied the tiny two-room apartment, and sat down in the unromantic morning light to wrestle with her stick of a hero. She had made her heroine a creature of grace, wit, and loveliness, but thus far the hero had not once clasped her to him fiercely, or pressed his lips to her hair, her eyes, her cheeks. Nay (as the story-writers would put it), he hadn't even devoured her with his gaze.

This morning, however, he had begun to show some signs of life. He was developing possibilities. Whereupon, at this critical stage in the story-writing game, the hair-washing mania seized Mary Louise. She tried to dismiss the idea. She pushed it out of her mind, and slammed the door. It only popped in again. Her fingers wandered to her hair. Her eyes wandered to the June sunshine outside. The hero was left poised, arms outstretched, and unquenchable love-light burning in his eyes, while Mary Louise mused, thus:

"It certainly feels sticky. It's been six weeks, at least. And I could sit here-by the window--in the sun--and dry it----"

With a jerk she brought her straying fingers away from her hair, and her wandering eyes away from the sunshine, and her runaway thoughts back to the typewritten page. For three minutes the snap of the little disks crackled through the stillness of the tiny apartment. Then, suddenly, as though succumbing to an irresistible force, Mary Louise rose, walked across the room (a matter of six steps), removing hairpins as she went, and shoved aside the screen which hid the stationary wash-bowl by day.

Mary Louise turned on a faucet and held her finger under it, while an agonized expression of doubt and suspense overspread her features. Slowly the look of suspense gave way to a smile of beatific content. A sigh--deep, soul-filling, satisfied--welled up from Mary Louise's breast. The water was hot.

Half an hour later, head swathed turban fashion in a towel, Mary Louise strolled over to the window. Then she stopped, aghast. In that half hour the sun had slipped just around the corner, and was now beating brightly and uselessly against the brick wall a few inches away. Slowly Mary Louise unwound the towel, bent double in the contortionistic attitude that women assume on such occasions, and watched with melancholy eyes while the drops trickled down to the ends of her hair, and fell, unsunned, to the floor.

"If only," thought Mary Louise, bitterly, "there was such a thing as a back yard in this city--a back yard where I could squat on the grass, in the sunshine and the breeze---- Maybe there is. I'll ask the janitor."

She bound her hair in the turban again, and opened the door. At the far end of the long, dim hallway Charlie, the janitor, was doing something to the floor with a mop and a great deal of sloppy water, whistling the while with a shrill abandon that had announced his presence to Mary Louise.

"Oh, Charlie!" called Mary Louise. "Charlee! Can you come here just a minute?"

"You bet!" answered Charlie, with the accent on the you; and came.

"Charlie, is there a back yard, or something, where the sun is, you know--some nice, grassy place where I can sit, and dry my hair, and let the breezes blow it?"

"Back yard!" grinned Charlie. "I guess you're new to N' York, all right, with ground costin' a million or so a foot. Not much they ain't no back yard, unless you'd give that name to an ash-barrel, and a dump heap or so, and a crop of tin cans. I wouldn't invite a goat to set in it."

Disappointment curved Mary Louise's mouth. It was a lovely enough mouth at any time, but when it curved in disappointment--ell, janitors are but human, after all.

"Tell you what, though," said Charlie. "I'll let you up on the roof. It ain't long on grassy spots up there, but say, breeze! Like a summer resort. On a clear day you can see way over 's far 's Eight' Avenoo. Only for the love of Mike don't blab it to the other women folks in the buildin', or I'll have the whole works of 'em usin' the roof for a general sun, massage, an' beauty parlor. Come on."

"I'll never breathe it to a soul," promised Mary Louise, solemnly. "Oh, wait a minute."

She turned back into her room, appearing again in a moment with something green in her hand.

"What's that?" asked Charlie, suspiciously.

Mary Louise, speeding down the narrow hallway after Charlie, blushed a little. "It--it's parsley," she faltered.

"Parsley!" exploded Charlie. "Well, what the----"

"Well, you see. I'm from the country," explained Mary Louise, "and in the country, at this time of year, when you dry your hair in the back yard, you get the most wonderful scent of green and growing things--not only of flowers, you know, but of the new things just coming up in the vegetable garden, and--and--well, this parsley happens to be the only really gardeny thing I have, so I thought I'd bring it along and sniff it once in a while, and make believe it's the country, up there on the roof."

Half-way up the perilous little flight of stairs that led to the roof,

Charlie, the janitor, turned to gaze down at Mary Louise, who was just behind, and keeping fearfully out of the way of Charlie's heels.

"Wimmin," observed Charlie, the janitor, "is nothin' but little girls in long skirts, and their hair done up."

"I know it," giggled Mary Louise, and sprang up on the roof, looking, with her towel-swathed head, like a lady Aladdin leaping from her underground grotto.

The two stood there a moment, looking up at the blue sky, and all about at the June sunshine.

"If you go up high enough," observed Mary Louise, "the sunshine is almost the same as it is in the country, isn't it?"

"I shouldn't wonder," said Charlie, "though Calvary cemetery is about as near's I'll ever get to the country. Say, you can set here on this soap box and let your feet hang down. The last janitor's wife used to hang her washin' up here, I guess. I'll leave this door open, see?"

"You're so kind," smiled Mary Louise.

"Kin you blame me?" retorted the gallant Charles. And vanished.

Mary Louise, perched on the soap box, unwound her turban, draped the damp towel over her shoulders, and shook out the wet masses of her hair. Now the average girl shaking out the wet masses of her hair looks like a drowned rat. But Nature had been kind to Mary Louise. She had given her hair that curled in little ringlets when wet, and that waved in all the right places when dry.

Just now it hung in damp, shining strands on either side of her face, so that she looked most remarkably like one of those oval-faced, great-eyed, red-lipped women that the old Italian artists were so fond of painting.

Below her, blazing in the sun, lay the great stone and iron city. Mary Louise shook out her hair idly, with one hand, sniffed her parsley, shut her eyes, threw back her head, and began to sing, beating time with her heel against the soap box, and forgetting all about the letter that had come that morning, stating that it was not from any lack of merit, etc. She sang, and sniffed her parsley, and waggled her hair in the breeze, and beat time, idly, with the heel of her little boot, when---

"Holy Cats!" exclaimed a man's voice. "What is this, anyway? A Coney Island concession gone wrong?"

Mary Louise's eyes unclosed in a flash, and Mary Louise gazed upon an irate-looking, youngish man, who wore shabby slippers, and no collar with a full dress air.

"I presume that you are the janitor's beautiful daughter," growled the collarless man.

"Well, not precisely," answered Mary Louise, sweetly. "Are you the scrub-lady's stalwart son?"

"Ha!" exploded the man. "But then, all women look alike with their hair down. I ask your pardon, though."

"Not at all," replied Mary Louise. "For that matter, all men look like picked chickens with their collars off."

At that the collarless man, who until now had been standing on the top step that led up to the roof, came slowly forward, stepped languidly over a skylight or two, draped his handkerchief over a convenient chimney and sat down, hugging his long, lean legs to him.

"Nice up here, isn't it?" he remarked.

"It was," said Mary Louise.

"Ha!" exploded he, again. Then, "Where's your mirror?" he demanded.

"Mirror?" echoed Mary Louise.

"Certainly. You have the hair, the comb, the attitude, and the general Lorelei effect. Also your singing lured me to your shores."

"You didn't look lured," retorted Mary Louise. "You looked lurid."

"What's that stuff in your hand?" next demanded he. He really was a most astonishingly rude young man.

"Parsley."

"Parsley!" shouted he, much as Charlie had done. "Well, what the----"

"Back home," elucidated Mary Louise once more, patiently, "after you've washed your hair you dry it in the back yard, sitting on the grass, in the sunshine and the breeze. And the garden smells come to you--the nasturtiums, and the pansies, and the geraniums, you know, and even that clean grass smell, and the pungent vegetable odor, and there are ants, and bees, and butterflies----"

"Go on," urged the young man, eagerly.

"And Mrs. Next Door comes out to hang up a few stockings, and a jabot or so, and a couple of baby dresses that she has just rubbed through, and she calls out to you:

"'Washed your hair?'

"'Yes,' you say. 'It was something awful, and I wanted it nice for Tuesday night. But I suppose I won't be able to do a thing with it.'"

"And then Mrs. Next Door stands there a minute on the clothes-reel platform, with the wind whipping her skirts about her, and the fresh smell of the growing things coming to her. And suddenly she says: 'I guess I'll wash mine too, while the baby's asleep.'"

The collarless young man rose from his chimney, picked up his handkerchief, and moved to the chimney just next to Mary Louise's soap box.

"Live here?" he asked, in his impolite way.

"If I did not, do you think that I would choose this as the one spot in all New York in which to dry my hair?"

"When I said, 'Live here,' I didn't mean just that. I meant who are you, and why are you here, and where do you come from, and do you sign your real name to your stuff, or use a nom de plume?"

"Why--how did you know?" gasped Mary Louise.

"Give me five minutes more," grinned the keen-eyed young man, "and I'll tell you what make your typewriter is, and where the last rejection slip came from."

"Oh!" said Mary Louise again. "Then you are the scrub-lady's stalwart son, and you've been ransacking my waste-basket."

Quite unheeding, the collarless man went on, "And so you thought you could write, and you came on to New York (you know one doesn't just travel to New York, or ride to it, or come to it; one 'comes on' to New York), and now you're not so sure about the writing, h'm? And back home what did you do?"

"Back home I taught school--and hated it. But I kept on teaching until I'd saved five hundred dollars. Every other school ma'am in the world teaches until she has saved five hundred dollars, and then she packs two suit-cases, and goes to Europe from June until September. But I saved my five hundred for New York. I've been here six months now, and the five hundred has shrunk to almost nothing, and if I don't break into the magazines pretty soon----"

"Then?"

"Then," said Mary Louise, with a quaver in her voice, "I'll have to go back and teach thirty-seven young devils that six times five is thirty, put down the naught and carry six, and that the French are a gay people, fond of dancing and light wines. But I'll scrimp on everything from hairpins to shoes, and back again, including pretty collars, and gloves, and hats, until I've saved up another five hundred, and then I'll try it all over again, because I--can--write."

From the depths of one capacious pocket the inquiring man took a small black pipe, from another a bag of tobacco, from another a match. The

long, deft fingers made a brief task of it.

"I didn't ask you," he said, after the first puff, "because I could see that you weren't the fool kind that objects." Then, with amazing suddenness, "Know any of the editors?"

"Know them!" cried Mary Louise. "Know them! If camping on their doorsteps, and haunting the office buildings, and cajoling, and fighting with secretaries and office boys, and assistants and things constitutes knowing them, then we're chums."

"What makes you think you can write?" sneered the thin man.

Mary Louise gathered up her brush, and comb, and towel, and parsley, and jumped off the soap box. She pointed belligerently at her tormentor with the hand that held the brush.

"Being the scrub-lady's stalwart son, you wouldn't understand. But I can write. I sha'n't go under. I'm going to make this town count me in as the four million and oneth. Sometimes I get so tired of being nobody at all, with not even enough cleverness in me to wrest a living from this big city, that I long to stand out at the edge of the curbing, and take off my hat, and wave it, and shout, 'Say, you four million uncaring people, I'm Mary Louise Moss, from Escanaba, Michigan, and I like your town, and I want to stay here. Won't you please pay some slight attention to me. No one knows I'm here except myself, and the rent collector.'"

"And I," put in the rude young man.

"O, you," sneered Mary Louise, equally rude, "you don't count."

The collarless young man in the shabby slippers smiled a curious little twisted smile. "You never can tell," he grinned, "I might." Then, quite suddenly, he stood up, knocked the ash out of his pipe, and came over to Mary Louise, who was preparing to descend the steep little flight of stairs.

"Look here, Mary Louise Moss, from Escanaba, Michigan, you stop trying to write the slop you're writing now. Stop it. Drop the love tales that are like the stuff that everybody else writes. Stop trying to write about New York. You don't know anything about it. Listen. You get back to work, and write about Mrs. Next Door, and the hair-washing, and the vegetable garden, and bees, and the back yard, understand? You write the way you talked to me, and then you send your stuff in to Cecil Reeves."

"Reeves!" mocked Mary Louise. "Cecil Reeves, of The Earth? He wouldn't dream of looking at my stuff. And anyway, it really isn't your affair." And began to descend the stairs.

"Well, you know you brought me up here, kicking with your heels, and singing at the top of your voice. I couldn't work. So it's really your fault." Then, just as Mary Louise had almost disappeared down the

stairway he put his last astonishing question.

"How often do you wash your hair?" he demanded.

"Well, back home," confessed Mary Louise, "every six weeks or so was enough, but---"

"Not here," put in the rude young man, briskly. "Never. That's all very well for the country, but it won't do in the city. Once a week, at least, and on the roof. Cleanliness demands it."

"But if I'm going back to the country," replied Mary Louise, "it won't be necessary."

"But you're not," calmly said the collarless young man, just as Mary Louise vanished from sight.

Down at the other end of the hallway on Mary Louise's floor Charlie, the janitor, was doing something to the windows now, with a rag, and a pail of water.

"Get it dry?" he called out, sociably.

"Yes, thank you," answered Mary Louise, and turned to enter her own little apartment. Then, hesitatingly, she came back to Charlie's window.

"There--there was a man up there--a very tall, very thin, very rude, very--that is, rather nice youngish oldish man, in slippers, and no collar. I wonder----"

"Oh, him!" snorted Charlie. "He don't show himself onct in a blue moon. None of the other tenants knows he's up there. Has the whole top floor to himself, and shuts himself up there for weeks at a time, writin' books, or some such truck. That guy, he owns the building."

"Owns the building!" said Mary Louise, faintly. "Why he looked--he looked----"

"Sure," grinned Charlie. "That's him. Name's Reeves--Cecil Reeves. Say, ain't that a divil of a name?"

(source: EBook #352)

Love,

by Anton Chekhov

"THREE o'clock in the morning. The soft April night is looking in at my windows and caressingly winking at me with its stars. I can't sleep, I am so happy!

"My whole being from head to heels is bursting with a strange, incomprehensible feeling. I can't analyse it just now--I haven't

the time, I'm too lazy, and there--hang analysis! Why, is a man likely to interpret his sensations when he is flying head foremost from a belfry, or has just learned that he has won two hundred thousand? Is he in a state to do it?"

This was more or less how I began my love-letter to Sasha, a girl of nineteen with whom I had fallen in love. I began it five times, and as often tore up the sheets, scratched out whole pages, and copied it all over again. I spent as long over the letter as if it had been a novel I had to write to order. And it was not because I tried to make it longer, more elaborate, and more fervent, but because I wanted endlessly to prolong the process of this writing, when one sits in the stillness of one's study and communes with one's own day-dreams while the spring night looks in at one's window. Between the lines I saw a beloved image, and it seemed to me that there were, sitting at the same table writing with me, spirits as naïvely happy, as foolish, and as blissfully smiling as I. I wrote continually, looking at my hand, which still ached deliciously where hers had lately pressed it, and if I turned my eyes away I had a vision of the green trellis of the little gate. Through that trellis Sasha gazed at me after I had said goodbye to her. When I was saying good-bye to Sasha I was thinking of nothing and was simply admiring her figure as every decent man admires a pretty woman; when I saw through the trellis two big eyes, I suddenly, as though by inspiration, knew that I was in love, that it was all settled between us, and fully decided already, that I had nothing left to do but to carry out certain formalities.

It is a great delight also to seal up a love-letter, and, slowly putting on one's hat and coat, to go softly out of the house and to carry the treasure to the post. There are no stars in the sky now: in their place there is a long whitish streak in the east, broken here and there by clouds above the roofs of the dingy houses; from that streak the whole sky is flooded with pale light. The town is asleep, but already the water-carts have come out, and somewhere in a far-away factory a whistle sounds to wake up the workpeople. Beside the postbox, slightly moist with dew, you are sure to see the clumsy figure of a house porter, wearing a bell-shaped sheepskin and carrying a stick. He is in a condition akin to catalepsy: he is not asleep or awake, but something between.

If the boxes knew how often people resort to them for the decision of their fate, they would not have such a humble air. I, anyway, almost kissed my postbox, and as I gazed at it I reflected that the post is the greatest of blessings.

I beg anyone who has ever been in love to remember how one usually hurries home after dropping the letter in the box, rapidly gets into bed and pulls up the quilt in the full conviction that as soon as one wakes up in the morning one will be overwhelmed with memories of the previous day and look with rapture at the window, where the daylight will be eagerly making its way through the folds of the curtain.

Well, to facts. . . . Next morning at midday, Sasha's maid brought me the following answer: "I am delited be sure to come to us to day please I shall expect you. Your S."

Not a single comma. This lack of punctuation, and the misspelling of the word "delighted," the whole letter, and even the long, narrow envelope in which it was put filled my heart with tenderness. In the sprawling but diffident handwriting I recognised Sasha's walk, her way of raising her eyebrows when she laughed, the movement of her lips. . . . But the contents of the letter did not satisfy me. In the first place, poetical letters are not answered in that way, and in the second, why should I go to Sasha's house to wait till it should occur to her stout mamma, her brothers, and poor relations to leave us alone together? It would never enter their heads, and nothing is more hateful than to have to restrain one's raptures simply because of the intrusion of some animate trumpery in the shape of a half-deaf old woman or little girl pestering one with questions. I sent an answer by the maid asking Sasha to select some park or boulevard for a rendezvous. My suggestion was readily accepted. I had struck the right chord, as the saying is.

Between four and five o'clock in the afternoon I made my way to the furthest and most overgrown part of the park. There was not a soul in the park, and the tryst might have taken place somewhere nearer in one of the avenues or arbours, but women don't like doing it by halves in romantic affairs; in for a penny, in for a pound--if you are in for a tryst, let it be in the furthest and most impenetrable thicket, where one runs the risk of stumbling upon some rough or drunken man. When I went up to Sasha she was standing with her back to me, and in that back I could read a devilish lot of mystery. It seemed as though that back and the nape of her neck, and the black spots on her dress were saying: Hush! . . . The girl was wearing a simple cotton dress over which she had thrown a light cape. To add to the air of mysterious secrecy, her face was covered with a white veil. Not to spoil the effect, I had to approach on tiptoe and speak in a half whisper.

From what I remember now, I was not so much the essential point of the rendezvous as a detail of it. Sasha was not so much absorbed in the interview itself as in its romantic mysteriousness, my kisses, the silence of the gloomy trees, my vows. . . . There was not a minute in which she forgot herself, was overcome, or let the mysterious expression drop from her face, and really if there had been any Ivan Sidoritch or Sidor Ivanitch in my place she would have felt just as happy. How is one to make out in such circumstances whether one is loved or not? Whether the love is "the real thing" or not?

From the park I took Sasha home with me. The presence of the beloved woman in one's bachelor quarters affects one like wine and music. Usually one begins to speak of the future, and the confidence and self-reliance with which one does so is beyond bounds. You make

plans and projects, talk fervently of the rank of general though you have not yet reached the rank of a lieutenant, and altogether you fire off such high-flown nonsense that your listener must have a great deal of love and ignorance of life to assent to it. Fortunately for men, women in love are always blinded by their feelings and never know anything of life. Far from not assenting, they actually turn pale with holy awe, are full of reverence and hang greedily on the maniac's words. Sasha listened to me with attention, but I soon detected an absent-minded expression on her face, she did not understand me. The future of which I talked interested her only in its external aspect and I was wasting time in displaying my plans and projects before her. She was keenly interested in knowing which would be her room, what paper she would have in the room, why I had an upright piano instead of a grand piano, and so on. She examined carefully all the little things on my table, looked at the photographs, sniffed at the bottles, peeled the old stamps off the envelopes, saying she wanted them for something.

"Please collect old stamps for me!" she said, making a grave face.
"Please do."

Then she found a nut in the window, noisily cracked it and ate it.

"Why don't you stick little labels on the backs of your books?" she asked, taking a look at the bookcase.

"What for?"

"Oh, so that each book should have its number. And where am I to put my books? I've got books too, you know."

"What books have you got?" I asked.

Sasha raised her eyebrows, thought a moment and said:

"All sorts."

And if it had entered my head to ask her what thoughts, what convictions, what aims she had, she would no doubt have raised her eyebrows, thought a minute, and have said in the same way: "All sorts."

Later I saw Sasha home and left her house regularly, officially engaged, and was so reckoned till our wedding. If the reader will allow me to judge merely from my personal experience, I maintain that to be engaged is very dreary, far more so than to be a husband or nothing at all. An engaged man is neither one thing nor the other, he has left one side of the river and not reached the other, he is not married and yet he can't be said to be a bachelor, but is in something not unlike the condition of the porter whom I have mentioned above.

Every day as soon as I had a free moment I hastened to my fiancée.

As I went I usually bore within me a multitude of hopes, desires, intentions, suggestions, phrases. I always fancied that as soon as the maid opened the door I should, from feeling oppressed and stifled, plunge at once up to my neck into a sea of refreshing happiness. But it always turned out otherwise in fact. Every time I went to see my fiancée I found all her family and other members of the household busy over the silly trousseau. (And by the way, they were hard at work sewing for two months and then they had less than a hundred roubles' worth of things). There was a smell of irons, candle grease and fumes. Bugles scrunched under one's feet. The two most important rooms were piled up with billows of linen, calico, and muslin and from among the billows peeped out Sasha's little head with a thread between her teeth. All the sewing party welcomed me with cries of delight but at once led me off into the dining-room where I could not hinder them nor see what only husbands are permitted to behold. In spite of my feelings, I had to sit in the dining-room and converse with Pimenovna, one of the poor relations. Sasha, looking worried and excited, kept running by me with a thimble, a skein of wool or some other boring object.

"Wait, wait, I shan't be a minute," she would say when I raised imploring eyes to her. "Only fancy that wretch Stepanida has spoilt the bodice of the barège dress!"

And after waiting in vain for this grace, I lost my temper, went out of the house and walked about the streets in the company of the new cane I had bought. Or I would want to go for a walk or a drive with my fiancée, would go round and find her already standing in the hall with her mother, dressed to go out and playing with her parasol.

"Oh, we are going to the Arcade," she would say. "We have got to buy some more cashmere and change the hat."

My outing is knocked on the head. I join the ladies and go with them to the Arcade. It is revoltingly dull to listen to women shopping, haggling and trying to outdo the sharp shopman. I felt ashamed when Sasha, after turning over masses of material and knocking down the prices to a minimum, walked out of the shop without buying anything, or else told the shopman to cut her some half rouble's worth.

When they came out of the shop, Sasha and her mamma with scared and worried faces would discuss at length having made a mistake, having bought the wrong thing, the flowers in the chintz being too dark, and so on.

Yes, it is a bore to be engaged! I'm glad it's over.

Now I am married. It is evening. I am sitting in my study reading. Behind me on the sofa Sasha is sitting munching something noisily. I want a glass of beer.

"Sasha, look for the corkscrew. . . ." I say. "It's lying about somewhere."

Sasha leaps up, rummages in a disorderly way among two or three heaps of papers, drops the matches, and without finding the corkscrew, sits down in silence. . . . Five minutes pass--ten. . . I begin to be fretted both by thirst and vexation.

"Sasha, do look for the corkscrew," I say.

Sasha leaps up again and rummages among the papers near me. Her munching and rustling of the papers affects me like the sound of sharpening knives against each other. . . . I get up and begin looking for the corkscrew myself. At last it is found and the beer is uncorked. Sasha remains by the table and begins telling me something at great length.

"You'd better read something, Sasha," I say.

She takes up a book, sits down facing me and begins moving her lips I look at her little forehead, moving lips, and sink into thought.

"She is getting on for twenty. . . ." I reflect. "If one takes a boy of the educated class and of that age and compares them, what a difference! The boy would have knowledge and convictions and some intelligence."

But I forgive that difference just as the low forehead and moving lips are forgiven. I remember in my old Lovelace days I have cast off women for a stain on their stockings, or for one foolish word, or for not cleaning their teeth, and now I forgive everything: the munching, the muddling about after the corkscrew, the slovenliness, the long talking about nothing that matters; I forgive it all almost unconsciously, with no effort of will, as though Sasha's mistakes were my mistakes, and many things which would have made me wince in old days move me to tenderness and even rapture. The explanation of this forgiveness of everything lies in my love for Sasha, but what is the explanation of the love itself, I really don't know.

(source: PG EBook #13414)

Tucson Jennies Heart. From *Wolfville*,
by Alfred Henry Lewis

"'Whyever ain't I married?' says you." The Old Cattleman repeated the question after me as he settled himself for one of our many "pow-wows," as he described them. "Looks like you've dealt me that conundrum before. Why ain't I wedded? The answer to that, son, is a long shot an' a limb in the way.

"Now I reckons the reason why I'm allers wifeless a whole lot is

mainly due to the wide pop'larity of them females I takes after. Some other gent sorter gets her first each time, an' nacherally that bars me. Bill Jenks's wife on that occasion is a spec'men case. That's one of the disapp'intments I onfolds to you. Now thar's a maiden I not only wants, but needs; jest the same, Bill gets her. An' it's allers sim'lar; I never yet holds better than ace-high when the stake's a lady.

"It's troo," he continued, reflectively puffing his pipe. "I was disp'sitioned for a wife that a-way when I'm a colt. But that's a long time ago; I ain't in line for no sech gymnastics no more; my years is 'way ag'in it.

"You've got to ketch folks young to marry 'em. After they gets to be thirty years they goes slowly to the altar. If you aims to marry a gent after he's thirty you has to blindfold him an' back him in. Females, of course, ain't so obdurate. No; I s'pose this yere bein' married is a heap habit, same as tobacco an' jig-juice. If a gent takes a hand early, it's a good game, I makes no sort of doubt. But let him get to millin' 'round in the thirties or later, an' him not begun none as yet; you bet he don't marry nothin'.

"Bar an onexplainable difference with the girl's old man," he went on with an air of thought, "I s'pose I'd be all married right now. I was twenty, them times. It's 'way back in Tennessee. Her folks lives about 'leven miles from me out on the Pine Knot Pike, an' once in two weeks I saddles up an' sorter sidles over. Thar's jest her old pap an' her mother an' her in the fam'ly, an' it's that far I allers made to stay all night. Thar's only two beds, an' so I'm put to camp along of the old man the times I stays.

"Them days I'm 'way bashful an' behind on all social plays, an' am plenty awe-struck about the old foiks. I never feels happy a minute where they be. The old lady does her best to make me easy an' free, too. Comes out when I rides up, an' lets down the bars for my hoss, an' asks me to rest my hat the second I'm in the door.

"Which matters goes on good enough until mebbly it's the eighth time I'm thar. I remembers the night all perfect. Me an' the girl sets up awhile, an' then I quits her an' turns in. I gets to sleep a-layin' along the aige of the bed, aimin' to keep 'way from the old man, who's snorln' an' thrashin' 'round an' takin' on over in the middle.

"I don't recall much of nothin' until I comes to, a-holdin' to the old man's y'ear with one hand an' a-hammerin' of his features with t'other. I don't know yet, why. I s'pose I'm locoed an' dreamin', an allows he's a b'ar or somethin' in my sleep that a-way, an' tries to kill him. "Son, it's 'way back a long time, but I shudders yet when I reflects on that old man's language. I jumps up when I realizes things, grabs my raiment, an', gettin' my hoss outen the corral, goes p'intin' down the pike more'n a mile 'fore I even stops to dress. The last I sees of the old man lie's buckin' an' pitchin' an' tossin', an' the females a-holdin' of him, an' he reachin' to get a

Hawkins's rifle as hangs over the door. I never goes back no more,
'cause he's mighty tindictive about it. He tries to make it a
grandjury matter next co't-time.

"Speakin' of nuptials, however, you can't tell much about women.
Thar's a girl who shorely s'prises us once in a way out in
Wolfville. Missis Rucker, who runs the O. K. Restauraw, gets this
female from Tucson to fry flap-jacks an' salt hoss, an' he'p her
deal her little gastronomic game. This yere girl's name is Jennie-
Tucson Jennie. She looks like she's a nice, good girl, too; one of
them which it's easy to love, an' in less'n two weeks thar's half
the camp gets smitten. "It affects business, it's that bad. Cherokee
Hall tells me thar ain't half the money gets changed in at faro as
usual, an' the New York Store reports gents goin' broke ag'in biled
shirts, an' sim'lar deadfalls daily. Of course this yere first
frenzy subsides a whole lot after a month. "All this time Jennie
ain't sayin' a word. She jest shoves them foolish yooths their
enchiladas an' ckile con carne, an' ignores all winks an' looks
complete.

"Thar's a party named Jim Baxter in camp, an' he sets in to win
Jennie hard. Jim tries to crowd the game an' get action. It looks
like he's due to make the trip too. Missis Rucker is backin' his
play, an' Jennie herse'f sorter lets him set 'round in the kitchen
an' watch her work; which this yore is license an' riot itse'f
compared with how she treats others. Occasionally some of us sorter
tries to stack up for Jim an' figger out where he stands with the
game.

"How's it goin', Baxter?' Enright asks one day.

"It's too many for me,' says Jim. 'Some-times I thinks I corrals
her, an' then ag'in it looks like I ain't in it. Jest now I'm
feelin' some dejected.'

"Somethin' oughter be schemed to settle this yere,' says Enright.
'It keeps the camp in a fever, an' mebbly gets serious an' spreads.'

"If somebody would only prance in,' says Doc Peets, 'an' shoot Jim
up some, you'd have her easy. Females is like a rabbit in a bush-
pile; you has to shake things up a lot to make 'em come out. Now, if
Jim is dyin' an' she cares for him, she's shorely goin' to show her
hand.'

"I wants to pause right yere to observe that Doc Peets is the best-
eddicated sharp I ever encounters in my life. An' what he don't know
about squaws is valueless as information. But to go on with the
deal.

"That's right,' says Cherokee Hall, 'but of course it ain't goin'
to do to shoot Jim up none.'

"I don't know,' says Jim; 'I stands quite a racket if I'm shore it

fetches her.'

"'What for a game,' says Cherokee, 'would it be to play like Jim's shot? Wouldn't that make her come a-runnin' same as if it's shore 'nough?'

"'I don't see why not,' says Enright.

"Well, the idee gains ground like an antelope, an' at last gets to be quite a conspir'cy. It's settled we plays it, with Dave Tutt to do the shootin'.

"'An' we makes the game complete,' says Jack Moore, 'by grabbin' Dave immediate an' bringin' of him before the committee, which convenes all reg'lar an' deecorous in the Red Light for said purpose. We-alls must line out like we're goin' to hang Dave for the killin'; otherwise it don't look nacheral nohow, an' the lady detects it's a bluff.'

"We gets things all ready, an' in the middle of the afternoon, when Jennie is draggin' her lariat 'round loose an' nothin' much to do-- 'cause we ain't aimin' to disturb her none in her dooties touchin' them flapjacks an' salt hoss--we-alls assembles over in the New York Store. As a preliminary step we lays Jim on some boxes, with a wagon-cover over him, like he's deceased.

"'Cl'ar things out of the way along by Jim's head,' says Jack Moore, who is takin' a big interest. 'We wants to fix things so Jen can swarm in at him easy. You hear me! she's goin' to come stampedin' in yere like wild cattle when she gets the news.'

"When everythin's ready, Tutt an' Jack, who concloods it's well to have a good deal of shootin', bangs away with their guns about four times apiece.

"'Jest shootin' once or twice,' says Jack, 'might arouse her s'picions. It would be a heap too brief for the real thing.'

"The minute the shootin' is ceased we-alls takes Tutt an' surges over to the Red Light to try him; a-pendin' of which Dan Boggs sa'nters across to the O. K. Restauraw an' remarks, all casooal an' careless like:

"'Dave Tutt downs Jim Baxter a minute back; good clean gun-play as ever I sees, too. Mighty big credit to both boys this yere is. No shootin' up the scenery an' the bystanders; no sech slobberin' work; but everythin' carries straight to centers.'

"'Where is he?' says Jennie, lookin' breathless an' sick.

"'Jim's remainder is in the New York Store,' says Dan.

"'Is he hurt?' she gasps.

"I don't reckon he hurts none now,' says Dan, 'cause he's done cashed in his stack. Why! girl, he's dead; eighteen bullets, caliber forty-five, plumb through him.'

"No, but Dave! Is Dave shot?' Tucson Jennie says, a-wringin' of her small paws.

"Now don't you go to feelin' discouraged none,' says Dan, beginnin' to feel sorry for her. 'We fixes the wretch so his murderin' sperit won't be an hour behind Jim's gettin' in. The Stranglers has him in the Red Light, makin' plans to stretch him right now.'

"We-alls has consoomed drinks all 'round, an' Enright is in the chair, an' we're busy settin' up a big front about hearin' the case, when Tucson Jennie, with a scream as scares up surroundin' things to sech a limit that five ponies hops out of the corral an' flies, comes chargin' into the Red Light, an' the next instant she drifts 'round Tutt's neck like so much snow.

"What for a game do you call this, anyhow?' says Jack Moore, who's a heap scand'lized. 'Is this yere maiden playin' anythin' on this camp?'

"She's plumb locoed with grief,' says Dan Boggs, who follers her in, 'an' she's done got 'em mixed in her mind. She thinks Dave is Baxter.'

"That's it,' says Cherokee. 'Her mind's stampeded with the shock. Me an' Jack takes her over to Jim's corpse, an' that's shore to revive her.' An' with that Cherokee an' Jack goes up to lead her away.

"Save him, Mister Enright; save him!' she pleads, still clingin' to Tutt's neck like the loop of a lariat. 'Don't let 'em hang him! Save him for my sake!'

"Hold on, Jack,' says Enright, who by now is lookin' some thoughtful. 'Jest everybody stand their hands yere till I counts the pot an' notes who's shy. It looks like we're cinchin' the hull onto the wrong bronco. Let me ask this female a question. Young woman,' he says to Tucson Jennie, 'be you fully informed as to whose neck you're hangin' to?'

"It's Dave's, ain't it?' she says, lookin' all tearful in his face to make shore.

"Enright an' the rest of us don't say nothin', but gazes at each other. Tutt flushes up an' shows pleased both at once. But all the same he puts his arms 'round her like the dead-game gent he is.

"What'll you-alls have, gents?" Enright says at last, quiet an' thoughtful. 'The drinks is on me, barkeep.'

"Excuse me,' says Doc Peets, 'but as the author of this yere plot, I takes it the p'ison is on me. Barkeep, set out all your bottles.'

"Gents,' says Jack Moore, 'I'm as peaceful a person as ever jingled a spur or pulled a gun in Wolfville; but as I reflects on the active part I takes in these yere ceremonies, I won't be responsible for results if any citizen comes between me an' payin' for the drinks. Barkeep, I'm doin' this myse'f.'

"Well, it's hard enoomeratin' how many drinks we do have. Jim Baxter throws away the wagon cover an' comes over from the New York Store an' stands in with us. It gets to be a orgy.

"Of course it's all right,' says Enright, 'the camp wins with Tutt instead of Baxter; that's all. It 'lustrates one of them beautiful characteristics of the gentler sex, too. Yere's Baxter, to say nothin' of twenty others, as besieges an' beleaguers this yere female for six weeks, an' she scorns 'em. Yere's Tutt, who ain't makin' a move, an' she grabs him. It is sech oncertainties, gents, as makes

the love of woman valuable.' "'You-alls should have asked me,' says Faro Nell, who comes in right then an' rounds up close to Cherokee. 'I could tell you two weeks ago Jennie's in love with Tutt. Anybody could see it. Why! she's been feedin' of him twice as good grub as she does anybody else.'"

(source: PG Etext #3732)

Marriage and Love

by Emma Goldman

The popular notion about marriage and love is that they are synonymous, that they spring from the same motives, and cover the same human needs. Like most popular notions this also rests not on actual facts, but on superstition.

Marriage and love have nothing in common; they are as far apart as the poles; are, in fact, antagonistic to each other. No doubt some marriages have been the result of love. Not, however, because love could assert itself only in marriage; much rather is it because few people can completely outgrow a convention. There are today large numbers of men and women to whom marriage is naught but a farce, but who submit to it for the sake of public opinion. At any rate, while it is true that some marriages are based on love, and while it is equally true that in some cases love continues in married life, I maintain that it does so regardless of marriage, and not because of it.

On the other hand, it is utterly false that love results from marriage. On rare occasions one does hear of a miraculous case of a married couple falling in love after marriage, but on close examination it will be found that it is a mere adjustment to the inevitable. Certainly the

growing-used to each other is far away from the spontaneity, the intensity, and beauty of love, without which the intimacy of marriage must prove degrading to both the woman and the man.

Marriage is primarily an economic arrangement, an insurance pact. It differs from the ordinary life insurance agreement only in that it is more binding, more exacting. Its returns are insignificantly small compared with the investments. In taking out an insurance policy one pays for it in dollars and cents, always at liberty to discontinue payments. If, however, woman's premium is a husband, she pays for it with her name, her privacy, her self-respect, her very life, "until death doth part." Moreover, the marriage insurance condemns her to life-long dependency, to parasitism, to complete uselessness, individual as well as social. Man, too, pays his toll, but as his sphere is wider, marriage does not limit him as much as woman. He feels his chains more in an economic sense.

Thus Dante's motto over Inferno applies with equal force to marriage.
"Ye who enter here leave all hope behind."

That marriage is a failure none but the very stupid will deny. One has but to glance over the statistics of divorce to realize how bitter a failure marriage really is. Nor will the stereotyped Philistine argument that the laxity of divorce laws and the growing looseness of woman account for the fact that: first, every twelfth marriage ends in divorce; second, that since 1870 divorces have increased from 28 to 73 for every hundred thousand population; third, that adultery, since 1867, as ground for divorce, has increased 270.8 per cent.; fourth, that desertion increased 369.8 per cent.

Added to these startling figures is a vast amount of material, dramatic and literary, further elucidating this subject. Robert Herrick, in *_Together_*; Pinero, in *_Mid-Channel_*; Eugene Walter, in *_Paid in Full_*, and scores of other writers are discussing the barrenness, the monotony, the sordidness, the inadequacy of marriage as a factor for harmony and understanding.

The thoughtful social student will not content himself with the popular superficial excuse for this phenomenon. He will have to dig down deeper into the very life of the sexes to know why marriage proves so disastrous.

Edward Carpenter says that behind every marriage stands the life-long environment of the two sexes; an environment so different from each other that man and woman must remain strangers. Separated by an insurmountable wall of superstition, custom, and habit, marriage has not the potentiality of developing knowledge of, and respect for, each other, without which every union is doomed to failure.

Henrik Ibsen, the hater of all social shams, was probably the first to realize this great truth. Nora leaves her husband, not--as the stupid critic would have it--because she is tired of her responsibilities or feels the need of woman's rights, but because she has come to know that

for eight years she had lived with a stranger and borne him children. Can there be anything more humiliating, more degrading than a life-long proximity between two strangers? No need for the woman to know anything of the man, save his income. As to the knowledge of the woman--what is there to know except that she has a pleasing appearance? We have not yet outgrown the theologic myth that woman has no soul, that she is a mere appendix to man, made out of his rib just for the convenience of the gentleman who was so strong that he was afraid of his own shadow.

Perchance the poor quality of the material whence woman comes is responsible for her inferiority. At any rate, woman has no soul--what is there to know about her? Besides, the less soul a woman has the greater her asset as a wife, the more readily will she absorb herself in her husband. It is this slavish acquiescence to man's superiority that has kept the marriage institution seemingly intact for so long a period. Now that woman is coming into her own, now that she is actually growing aware of herself as a being outside of the master's grace, the sacred institution of marriage is gradually being undermined, and no amount of sentimental lamentation can stay it.

From infancy, almost, the average girl is told that marriage is her ultimate goal; therefore her training and education must be directed towards that end. Like the mute beast fattened for slaughter, she is prepared for that. Yet, strange to say, she is allowed to know much less about her function as wife and mother than the ordinary artisan of his trade. It is indecent and filthy for a respectable girl to know anything of the marital relation. Oh, for the inconsistency of respectability, that needs the marriage vow to turn something which is filthy into the purest and most sacred arrangement that none dare question or criticize. Yet that is exactly the attitude of the average upholder of marriage. The prospective wife and mother is kept in complete ignorance of her only asset in the competitive field--sex. Thus she enters into life-long relations with a man only to find herself shocked, repelled, outraged beyond measure by the most natural and healthy instinct, sex. It is safe to say that a large percentage of the unhappiness, misery, distress, and physical suffering of matrimony is due to the criminal ignorance in sex matters that is being extolled as a great virtue. Nor is it at all an exaggeration when I say that more than one home has been broken up because of this deplorable fact.

If, however, woman is free and big enough to learn the mystery of sex without the sanction of State or Church, she will stand condemned as utterly unfit to become the wife of a "good" man, his goodness consisting of an empty brain and plenty of money. Can there be anything more outrageous than the idea that a healthy, grown woman, full of life and passion, must deny nature's demand, must subdue her most intense craving, undermine her health and break her spirit, must stunt her vision, abstain from the depth and glory of sex experience until a "good" man comes along to take her unto himself as a wife? That is precisely what marriage means. How can such an arrangement end except in failure? This is one, though not the least important, factor of marriage, which differentiates it from love.

Ours is a practical age. The time when Romeo and Juliet risked the wrath of their fathers for love, when Gretchen exposed herself to the gossip of her neighbors for love, is no more. If, on rare occasions, young people allow themselves the luxury of romance, they are taken in care by the elders, drilled and pounded until they become "sensible."

The moral lesson instilled in the girl is not whether the man has aroused her love, but rather is it, "How much?" The important and only God of practical American life: Can the man make a living? can he support a wife? That is the only thing that justifies marriage. Gradually this saturates every thought of the girl; her dreams are not of moonlight and kisses, of laughter and tears; she dreams of shopping tours and bargain counters. This soul poverty and sordidness are the elements inherent in the marriage institution. The State and the Church approve of no other ideal, simply because it is the one that necessitates the State and Church control of men and women.

Doubtless there are people who continue to consider love above dollars and cents. Particularly is this true of that class whom economic necessity has forced to become self-supporting. The tremendous change in woman's position, wrought by that mighty factor, is indeed phenomenal when we reflect that it is but a short time since she has entered the industrial arena. Six million women wage workers; six million women, who have the equal right with men to be exploited, to be robbed, to go on strike; aye, to starve even. Anything more, my lord? Yes, six million wage workers in every walk of life, from the highest brain work to the mines and railroad tracks; yes, even detectives and policemen. Surely the emancipation is complete.

Yet with all that, but a very small number of the vast army of women wage workers look upon work as a permanent issue, in the same light as does man. No matter how decrepit the latter, he has been taught to be independent, self-supporting. Oh, I know that no one is really independent in our economic treadmill; still, the poorest specimen of a man hates to be a parasite; to be known as such, at any rate.

The woman considers her position as worker transitory, to be thrown aside for the first bidder. That is why it is infinitely harder to organize women than men. "Why should I join a union? I am going to get married, to have a home." Has she not been taught from infancy to look upon that as her ultimate calling? She learns soon enough that the home, though not so large a prison as the factory, has more solid doors and bars. It has a keeper so faithful that naught can escape him. The most tragic part, however, is that the home no longer frees her from wage slavery; it only increases her task.

According to the latest statistics submitted before a Committee "on labor and wages, and congestion of population," ten per cent. of the wage workers in New York City alone are married, yet they must continue to work at the most poorly paid labor in the world. Add to this horrible aspect the drudgery of housework, and what remains of the protection and glory of the home? As a matter of fact, even the middle-class girl in

marriage can not speak of her home, since it is the man who creates her sphere. It is not important whether the husband is a brute or a darling. What I wish to prove is that marriage guarantees woman a home only by the grace of her husband. There she moves about in his home, year after year, until her aspect of life and human affairs becomes as flat, narrow, and drab as her surroundings. Small wonder if she becomes a nag, petty, quarrelsome, gossipy, unbearable, thus driving the man from the house. She could not go, if she wanted to; there is no place to go. Besides, a short period of married life, of complete surrender of all faculties, absolutely incapacitates the average woman for the outside world. She becomes reckless in appearance, clumsy in her movements, dependent in her decisions, cowardly in her judgment, a weight and a bore, which most men grow to hate and despise. Wonderfully inspiring atmosphere for the bearing of life, is it not?

But the child, how is it to be protected, if not for marriage? After all, is not that the most important consideration? The sham, the hypocrisy of it! Marriage protecting the child, yet thousands of children destitute and homeless. Marriage protecting the child, yet orphan asylums and reformatories overcrowded, the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children keeping busy in rescuing the little victims from "loving" parents, to place them under more loving care, the Gerry Society. Oh, the mockery of it!

Marriage may have the power to bring the horse to water, but has it ever made him drink? The law will place the father under arrest, and put him in convict's clothes; but has that ever stilled the hunger of the child? If the parent has no work, or if he hides his identity, what does marriage do then? It invokes the law to bring the man to "justice," to put him safely behind closed doors; his labor, however, goes not to the child, but to the State. The child receives but a blighted memory of its father's stripes.

As to the protection of the woman,--therein lies the curse of marriage. Not that it really protects her, but the very idea is so revolting, such an outrage and insult on life, so degrading to human dignity, as to forever condemn this parasitic institution.

It is like that other paternal arrangement--capitalism. It robs man of his birthright, stunts his growth, poisons his body, keeps him in ignorance, in poverty, and dependence, and then institutes charities that thrive on the last vestige of man's self-respect.

The institution of marriage makes a parasite of woman, an absolute dependent. It incapacitates her for life's struggle, annihilates her social consciousness, paralyzes her imagination, and then imposes its gracious protection, which is in reality a snare, a travesty on human character.

If motherhood is the highest fulfillment of woman's nature, what other protection does it need, save love and freedom? Marriage but defiles, outrages, and corrupts her fulfillment. Does it not say to woman, Only when you follow me shall you bring forth life? Does it not condemn her

to the block, does it not degrade and shame her if she refuses to buy her right to motherhood by selling herself? Does not marriage only sanction motherhood, even though conceived in hatred, in compulsion?

Yet, if motherhood be of free choice, of love, of ecstasy, of defiant passion, does it not place a crown of thorns upon an innocent head and carve in letters of blood the hideous epithet, Bastard? Were marriage to contain all the virtues claimed for it, its crimes against motherhood would exclude it forever from the realm of love.

Love, the strongest and deepest element in all life, the harbinger of hope, of joy, of ecstasy; love, the defier of all laws, of all conventions; love, the freest, the most powerful moulder of human destiny; how can such an all-compelling force be synonymous with that poor little State and Church-begotten weed, marriage?

Free love? As if love is anything but free! Man has bought brains, but all the millions in the world have failed to buy love. Man has subdued bodies, but all the power on earth has been unable to subdue love. Man has conquered whole nations, but all his armies could not conquer love.

Man has chained and fettered the spirit, but he has been utterly helpless before love. High on a throne, with all the splendor and pomp his gold can command, man is yet poor and desolate, if love passes him by. And if it stays, the poorest hovel is radiant with warmth, with life and color. Thus love has the magic power to make of a beggar a king.

Yes, love is free; it can dwell in no other atmosphere. In freedom it gives itself unreservedly, abundantly, completely. All the laws on the statutes, all the courts in the universe, cannot tear it from the soil, once love has taken root. If, however, the soil is sterile, how can marriage make it bear fruit? It is like the last desperate struggle of fleeting life against death.

Love needs no protection; it is its own protection. So long as love begets life no child is deserted, or hungry, or famished for the want of affection. I know this to be true. I know women who became mothers in freedom by the men they loved. Few children in wedlock enjoy the care, the protection, the devotion free motherhood is capable of bestowing.

The defenders of authority dread the advent of a free motherhood, lest it will rob them of their prey. Who would fight wars? Who would create wealth? Who would make the policeman, the jailer, if woman were to refuse the indiscriminate breeding of children? The race, the race! shouts the king, the president, the capitalist, the priest. The race must be preserved, though woman be degraded to a mere machine,--and the marriage institution is our only safety valve against the pernicious sex awakening of woman. But in vain these frantic efforts to maintain a state of bondage. In vain, too, the edicts of the Church, the mad attacks of rulers, in vain even the arm of the law. Woman no longer wants to be a party to the production of a race of sickly, feeble, decrepit, wretched human beings, who have neither the strength nor moral courage to throw off the yoke of poverty and slavery. Instead she

desires fewer and better children, begotten and reared in love and through free choice; not by compulsion, as marriage imposes. Our pseudo-moralists have yet to learn the deep sense of responsibility toward the child, that love in freedom has awakened in the breast of woman. Rather would she forego forever the glory of motherhood than bring forth life in an atmosphere that breathes only destruction and death. And if she does become a mother, it is to give to the child the deepest and best her being can yield. To grow with the child is her motto; she knows that in that manner alone can she help build true manhood and womanhood.

Ibsen must have had a vision of a free mother, when, with a master stroke, he portrayed Mrs. Alving. She was the ideal mother because she had outgrown marriage and all its horrors, because she had broken her chains, and set her spirit free to soar until it returned a personality, regenerated and strong. Alas, it was too late to rescue her life's joy, her Oswald; but not too late to realize that love in freedom is the only condition of a beautiful life. Those who, like Mrs. Alving, have paid with blood and tears for their spiritual awakening, repudiate marriage as an imposition, a shallow, empty mockery. They know, whether love last but one brief span of time or for eternity, it is the only creative, inspiring, elevating basis for a new race, a new world.

In our present pygmy state love is indeed a stranger to most people. Misunderstood and shunned, it rarely takes root; or if it does, it soon withers and dies. Its delicate fiber can not endure the stress and strain of the daily grind. Its soul is too complex to adjust itself to the slimy woof of our social fabric. It weeps and moans and suffers with those who have need of it, yet lack the capacity to rise to love's summit.

Some day, some day men and women will rise, they will reach the mountain peak, they will meet big and strong and free, ready to receive, to partake, and to bask in the golden rays of love. What fancy, what imagination, what poetic genius can foresee even approximately the potentialities of such a force in the life of men and women. If the world is ever to give birth to true companionship and oneness, not marriage, but love will be the parent.

(source PG EBook #20715)



The Social Emergency

By William Trufant Foster

Concerning matters of sex and reproduction there has been for many generations a conspiracy of silence. The silence is now broken. Whatever may be the wisdom or the folly of this change of attitude, it is a fact; and it constitutes a social emergency.

Throughout the nineteenth century the taboo prevailed. Certain subjects were rarely mentioned in public, and then only in euphemistic terms. The home, the church, the school; and the press joined in the conspiracy. Supposedly, they were keeping the young in a blessed state of innocence. As a matter of fact, other agencies were busy disseminating falsehoods. Most of our boys and girls, having no opportunity to hear sex and marriage and motherhood discussed with reverence, heard these matters discussed with vulgarity. While those interested in the welfare of the young withheld the truth, those who could profit by their downfall poisoned their minds with error and half-truths. An abundance of distressing evidence showed that nearly all children gained information concerning sex and reproduction from foul sources,--from misinformed playmates, degenerates, obscene pictures, booklets, and advertisements of quack doctors. At the same time the social evil and its train of tragic consequences showed no abatement. The policy of silence, after many generations of trial, proved a failure.

The past few years have seen a sudden change. Subjects formerly tabooed are now thrust before the public. The plain-spoken publications of social hygiene societies are distributed by hundreds of thousands. Public exhibits, setting forth the horrors of venereal diseases, are sent from place to place. Motion-picture films portray white slavers, prostitutes, and restricted districts, and show exactly how an innocent girl may be seduced, betrayed, and sold. The stage finds it profitable to offer problem plays concerned with illicit love, with prostitution, and even with the results of venereal contagion. Newspapers that formerly made only brief references to corespondents, houses of bad repute, statutory offenses, and serious charges, now fill columns with detailed accounts of divorce trials, traffic in women, earnings of prostitutes, and raids on houses. Novels that might have been condemned and suppressed a few decades ago are now listed among "the best sellers." Lectures on sex hygiene and morals are given widely, over four hundred such lectures having been given under the auspices of a single society. Fake doctors, while obeying the letter of new laws, are bolder than ever in some directions and use the alarm caused by the production of Damaged Goods, for example, as a means of snaring new victims. Generations of silence, enforced by the powerful influence of social custom, have been suddenly followed by a campaign of pitiless publicity, sanctioned by eminent men and women, and carried forward by the agencies of public education that daily reach the largest number of human beings--namely, the press, the motion picture, and the stage.

This far-reaching change in the customs of society is fraught with immediate dangers, because we do not know whether the mere knowledge of facts concerning sexual processes, vices, and diseases will do a given individual harm or good. The effect of such information upon any person is unquestionably determined by his physiological age, by his nervous system, by the manner and time of the presentation of the subject; above all, by his will power and the controlling ideals that are acquired along with scientific facts. As yet, we have not discovered thoroughly trustworthy pedagogical principles, administrative methods, and printed materials for public education in matters of sex. So difficult and complicated are the

problems, and so disastrous are mistakes in this field of instruction, that the home, the church, and the school--the institutions to which young people should naturally look for truth in all matters, the agencies best qualified to solve the problems--are extremely cautious and conservative. While these agencies, which are concerned primarily with the welfare of the individual, the family, and society, have made some efforts to solve the problems, and to discover a safe and gradual transition from the old order to the new, other agencies, concerned primarily with making money, have rushed in to exploit the new freedom and the universal interest in matters of sex. This passing of the old order, and the invasion of the new order before we are prepared for it, constitute the social emergency of the twentieth century. Great as are the industrial and political revolutions of modern times, it is doubtful if anything so deeply concerns the coming generations as our measure of success in confronting the present social emergency.

In no other phase of social education are mistakes so serious. Other changes, demanded by new ideas of the function of the school, have been made prematurely and clumsily, but without grave danger. We have adjusted ourselves readily enough to compulsory education, normal schools, higher education for women, expert supervision, the kindergartens, physical training, industrial schools, university extension, care of defectives, and vocational guidance. Every new type of school and every new subject has been introduced before there were teachers trained for the new work. We stumbled along. Few were greatly concerned over mistakes in the teaching of penmanship and spelling and millinery and Latin and algebra. Few protested against the inefficient teaching of physiology as long as it rattled only dry bones, and had no evident relation to the physical functions and health of the student. But the moment men proposed to teach a subject of vital consequence, there was a cry of protest--and rightly.

Here mistakes will not do: here incompetent teachers cannot be trusted. Ill-advised efforts to teach sex hygiene may aggravate the very evils we are trying to assuage. Because the subject is of vital importance, education in sexual hygiene and morals must proceed cautiously and conservatively; according to tried methods, psychologically sound; always under the control of men and women of maturity, who see the present emergency in its many phases, who know how to teach, whose character is in keeping with the highest ideals of their work, and who approach their subject with reverence and their pupils with the joy and inspiration which come from a large opportunity to serve mankind.

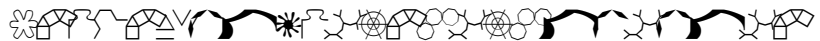
Unhappily, not all of those who have been stimulated by the new freedom of speech to thrust themselves forward as teachers of sex hygiene, and as social reformers, are safe leaders. Some are ignorant and unaware that enthusiasm is not a satisfactory substitute for knowledge. Some are hysterical. At a recent purity convention, a woman said, "I know little about the facts, but it is wonderful how much ignorance can accomplish when accompanied by devotion and persistence." That declaration was applauded. Some people appear to believe that they will arrive safely if they go rapidly enough and far enough, even though they may be going in the wrong direction. Many retard the movement for social hygiene by making statements they do not know to be true, especially in respect to the

extent of sexual immorality, the number of prostitutes, and the prevalence of venereal disease. Young people of opposite sexes, finding evidence on every hand that the traditional taboo is removed, discuss the subject for personal pleasure.

The books in the field of social hygiene which have most scrupulously and successfully avoided everything that might be sexually stimulating are not the ones bought by the largest numbers. The demand for erotic publications is so great as to warn us in advance that the new freedom will prove dangerous for many whose minds are already unclean. The propaganda for social purity is unlike many others, in that there is special danger of doing injury to the very ones in special need of help. The fact that the young, the ignorant, the hysterical, and the sexually abnormal, as well as commercialized agencies, are using the newfound license in dangerous ways is reason enough for the liberal and whole-hearted support of the American Social Hygiene Association and affiliated societies.

These private organizations are striving to meet the present social emergency. They are temporary expedients. Their chief aim is public education. They should frustrate the efforts of all dangerous agencies and hasten the day when the home, the church, and the school shall meet their full responsibilities in the teaching of sexual hygiene and morals.

(source: PG EBook #15858)



The Oval Portrait,
by Edgar Allan Poe

THE chateau into which my valet had ventured to make forcible entrance, rather than permit me, in my desperately wounded condition, to pass a night in the open air, was one of those piles of commingled gloom and grandeur which have so long frowned among the Appennines, not less in fact than in the fancy of Mrs. Radcliffe. To all appearance it had been temporarily and very lately abandoned. We established ourselves in one of the smallest and least sumptuously furnished apartments. It lay in a remote turret of the building. Its decorations were rich, yet tattered and antique. Its walls were hung with tapestry and bedecked with manifold and multiform armorial trophies, together with an unusually great number of very spirited modern paintings in frames of rich golden arabesque. In these paintings, which depended from the walls not only in their main surfaces, but in very many nooks which the bizarre architecture of the chateau rendered necessary--in these paintings my incipient delirium, perhaps, had caused me to take deep interest; so that I bade Pedro to close the heavy shutters of the room--since it was already night--to light the tongues of a tall candelabrum which stood by the head of my bed--and to throw open far and wide the fringed curtains of black velvet which enveloped the bed itself. I wished all this done that I might resign myself, if not to sleep, at least alternately to the contemplation of these pictures, and the perusal of a small volume which had been found upon the pillow, and which purported to criticise and

describe them.

Long--long I read--and devoutly, devotedly I gazed. Rapidly and gloriously the hours flew by and the deep midnight came. The position of the candelabrum displeased me, and outreaching my hand with difficulty, rather than disturb my slumbering valet, I placed it so as to throw its rays more fully upon the book.

But the action produced an effect altogether unanticipated. The rays of the numerous candles (for there were many) now fell within a niche of the room which had hitherto been thrown into deep shade by one of the bed-posts. I thus saw in vivid light a picture all unnoticed before. It was the portrait of a young girl just ripening into womanhood. I glanced at the painting hurriedly, and then closed my eyes. Why I did this was not at first apparent even to my own perception. But while my lids remained thus shut, I ran over in my mind my reason for so shutting them. It was an impulsive movement to gain time for thought--to make sure that my vision had not deceived me--to calm and subdue my fancy for a more sober and more certain gaze. In a very few moments I again looked fixedly at the painting.

That I now saw aright I could not and would not doubt; for the first flashing of the candles upon that canvas had seemed to dissipate the dreamy stupor which was stealing over my senses, and to startle me at once into waking life.

The portrait, I have already said, was that of a young girl. It was a mere head and shoulders, done in what is technically termed a vignette manner; much in the style of the favorite heads of Sully. The arms, the bosom, and even the ends of the radiant hair melted imperceptibly into the vague yet deep shadow which formed the back-ground of the whole. The frame was oval, richly gilded and filigreed in Moresque. As a thing of art nothing could be more admirable than the painting itself. But it could have been neither the execution of the work, nor the immortal beauty of the countenance, which had so suddenly and so vehemently moved me. Least of all, could it have been that my fancy, shaken from its half slumber, had mistaken the head for that of a living person. I saw at once that the peculiarities of the design, of the vignetting, and of the frame, must have instantly dispelled such idea--must have prevented even its momentary entertainment. Thinking earnestly upon these points, I remained, for an hour perhaps, half sitting, half reclining, with my vision riveted upon the portrait. At length, satisfied with the true secret of its effect, I fell back within the bed. I had found the spell of the picture in an absolute life-likeness of expression, which, at first startling, finally confounded, subdued, and appalled me. With deep and reverent awe I replaced the candelabrum in its former position. The cause of my deep agitation being thus shut from view, I sought eagerly the volume which discussed the paintings and their histories. Turning to the number which designated the oval portrait, I there read the vague and quaint words which follow:

"She was a maiden of rarest beauty, and not more lovely than full of glee. And evil was the hour when she saw, and loved, and wedded the

painter. He, passionate, studious, austere, and having already a bride in his Art; she a maiden of rarest beauty, and not more lovely than full of glee; all light and smiles, and frolicsome as the young fawn; loving and cherishing all things; hating only the Art which was her rival; dreading only the pallet and brushes and other untoward instruments which deprived her of the countenance of her lover. It was thus a terrible thing for this lady to hear the painter speak of his desire to portray even his young bride. But she was humble and obedient, and sat meekly for many weeks in the dark, high turret-chamber where the light dripped upon the pale canvas only from overhead. But he, the painter, took glory in his work, which went on from hour to hour, and from day to day. And he was a passionate, and wild, and moody man, who became lost in reveries; so that he would not see that the light which fell so ghastly in that lone turret withered the health and the spirits of his bride, who pined visibly to all but him. Yet she smiled on and still on, uncomplainingly, because she saw that the painter (who had high renown) took a fervid and burning pleasure in his task, and wrought day and night to depict her who so loved him, yet who grew daily more dispirited and weak. And in sooth some who beheld the portrait spoke of its resemblance in low words, as of a mighty marvel, and a proof not less of the power of the painter than of his deep love for her whom he depicted so surpassingly well. But at length, as the labor drew nearer to its conclusion, there were admitted none into the turret; for the painter had grown wild with the ardor of his work, and turned his eyes from canvas merely, even to regard the countenance of his wife. And he would not see that the tints which he spread upon the canvas were drawn from the cheeks of her who sate beside him. And when many weeks had passed, and but little remained to do, save one brush upon the mouth and one tint upon the eye, the spirit of the lady again flickered up as the flame within the socket of the lamp. And then the brush was given, and then the tint was placed; and, for one moment, the painter stood entranced before the work which he had wrought; but in the next, while he yet gazed, he grew tremulous and very pallid, and aghast, and crying with a loud voice, "This is indeed Life itself!" turned suddenly to regard his beloved:--She was dead!"

(source: EBook #2147)



The Beautiful Daughter of Liu-Kung,

by Rev. J MacGowan, D.D.

In one of the central provinces of this long-lived Empire of China, there lived in very early times a man of the name of Chan. He was a person of a bright, active nature which made him enjoy life, and caused him to be popular amongst his companions and a favourite with every one who knew him. But he was also a scholar, well-versed in the literature of his country, and he spent every moment that he could spare in the study of the great writings of the famous men of former days.

In order that he might be interrupted as little as possible in his

pursuit of learning, he engaged a room in a famous monastery some miles away from his own home. The only inhabitants of this monastery were a dozen or so of Buddhist priests, who, except when they were engaged in the daily services of the temple, lived a quiet, humdrum, lazy kind of existence which harmonized well with the solitude and the majestic stillness of the mountain scenery by which they were surrounded.

This monastery was indeed one of the most beautiful in China. It was situated on the slope of a hill, looking down upon a lovely valley, where the natural solitude was as complete as the most devoted hermit could desire. The only means of getting to it were the narrow hill footpaths along which the worshippers from the great city and the scattered villages wound in and out on festal days, when they came trooping to the temple to make their offerings to the famous God enshrined within.

Chan was a diligent student, and rarely indulged in recreation of any kind. Occasionally, when his mind became oppressed with excessive study he would go for a quiet walk along the hillside; but these occasions were few and far between, for he made up for every hour he spent away from his beloved books by still closer application to them in the hours that followed.

One day he was strolling in an aimless kind of way on the hillside, when suddenly a party of hunters from the neighbouring city of Eternal Spring came dashing into view. They were a merry group and full of excitement, for they had just sighted a fox which Chan had seen a moment before flying away at its highest speed in mortal dread of its pursuers.

Prominent amongst the hunters was a young girl, who was mounted on a fiery little steed, so full of spirit and so eager to follow in the mad chase after the prey, that its rider seemed to have some difficulty in restraining it. The girl herself was a perfect picture. Her face was the loveliest that Chan had ever looked upon, and her figure, which her trim hunting dress showed off to the utmost advantage, was graceful in the extreme. As she swept by him with her face flushed with excitement and her features all aglow with health, Chan felt at once that he had lost his heart and that he was deeply and profoundly in love with her.

On making enquiries, he found that she was named Willow, that she was the daughter of the chief mandarin of the town in which she lived, and that she was intensely fond of the chase and delighted in galloping over the hills and valleys in the pursuit of the wild animals to be found there. So powerfully had Chan's mind been affected by what he had seen of Willow, that he had already begun to entertain serious thoughts of making her his wife; but while his mind was full of this delightful prospect he was plunged into the deepest grief by hearing that she had suddenly died. For some days he was so stricken with sorrow that he lost all interest in life, and could do nothing but dwell on the memory of her whom he had come to love with all the devotion of his heart.

A few weeks after the news of her death, the quiet of the retreat was one day broken by a huge procession which wound its way along the mountain path leading to the monastery doors. On looking out, Chan saw that many of the men in this procession were dressed in sackcloth, and that in front of it was a band of musicians producing weird, shrill notes on their various instruments.

By these signs Chan knew that what he saw was a funeral, and he expected to see the long line of mourners pass on to some spot on the hillside where the dead would be buried. Instead of that, however, they entered through the great gates of the monastery, and the coffin, the red pall of which told him that it contained the body of a woman, was carried into an inner room of the building and laid on trestles that had been made ready for it.

After the mourners had dispersed, Chan asked one of the priests the name of the woman who had died, and how it was that the coffin was laid within the precincts of the temple instead of in the house of the deceased, where it could be looked after by her relatives and where the customary sacrifices to the spirit of the dead could be offered more conveniently than in the monastery.

The bonze replied that this was a peculiar case, calling for special treatment.

"The father of the poor young girl who died so suddenly," he said, "was the mandarin of the neighbouring city of Eternal Spring. Just after the death of his daughter an order came from the Emperor transferring him to another district, a thousand miles from here.

"The command was very urgent that he should proceed without delay to take up his post in the far-off province, and that he was to allow nothing to hinder him from doing so. He could not carry his daughter's body with him on so long a journey, and no time was permitted him to take the coffin to his home, where she might be buried amongst her own kindred. It was equally impossible to deposit the coffin in the yamen he was about to leave, for the new mandarin who was soon to arrive would certainly object to have the body of a stranger in such close proximity to his family. It might bring him bad luck, and his career as an official might end in disaster.

"Permission was therefore asked from our abbot to allow the coffin to be placed in one of our vacant rooms, until the father some day in the future can come and bear the body of his beloved daughter to the home of his ancestors, there to be laid at rest amongst his own people.

"This request was readily granted, for whilst he was in office the mandarin showed us many favours, and his daughter was a beautiful girl who was beloved by everyone; and so we were only too glad to do anything in our power to help in this unhappy matter."

Chan was profoundly moved when he realized that the woman whom he had loved as his own life lay dead within a chamber only a few steps away

from his own. His passion, instead of being crushed out of his heart by the thought that she was utterly beyond his reach, and by no possibility could ever be more to him than a memory, seemed to grow in intensity as he became conscious that it was an absolutely hopeless one.

On that very same evening, about midnight, when silence rested on the monastery, and the priests were all wrapped in slumber, Chan, with a lighted taper in his hand, stole with noiseless footsteps along the dark passages into the chamber of death where his beloved lay. Kneeling beside the coffin with a heart full of emotion, in trembling accents he called upon Willow to listen to the story of his passion.

He spoke to her just as though she were standing face to face with him, and he told her how he had fallen in love with her on the day on which he had caught a glimpse of her as she galloped in pursuit of the fox that had fled through the valley from the hunters. He had planned, he told her, to make her his wife, and he described, in tones through which the tears could be heard to run, how heart-broken he was when he heard of her death.

"I want to see you," he continued, "for I feel that I cannot live without you. You are near to me, and yet oh! how far away. Can you not come from the Land of Shadows, where you are now, and comfort me by one vision of your fair face, and one sound of the voice that would fill my soul with the sweetest music?"

For many months the comfort of Chan's life was this nightly visit to the chamber where his dead love lay. Not a single night passed without his going to tell her of the unalterable and undying affection that filled his heart; and whilst the temple lay shrouded in darkness, and the only sounds that broke the stillness were those inexplicable ones in which nature seems to indulge when man is removed by sleep from the scene, Chan was uttering those love notes which had lain deeply hidden within his soul, but which now in the utter desolation of his heart burst forth to ease his pain by their mere expression.

One night as he was sitting poring over his books, he happened to turn round, and was startled to see the figure of a young girl standing just inside the door of his room. It seemed perfectly human, and yet it was so ethereal that it had the appearance of a spirit of the other world. As he looked at the girl with a wondering gaze, a smile lit up her beautiful features, and he then discovered to his great joy that she was none other than Willow, his lost love whom he had despaired of ever seeing again.

With her face wreathed in smiles, she sat down beside him and said in a timid, modest way:--"I am here to-night in response to the great love which has never faltered since the day I died. That is the magnet which has had the power of drawing me from the Land of Shadows. I felt it there, and many speak about it in that sunless country. Even Yam-lo, the lord of the spirits of that dreary world, has been moved by your unchanging devotion; so much so that he has given me permission to come and see you, in order that I might tell you how deeply my heart is

moved by the profound affection that you have exhibited for me all these months during which you never had any expectation of its being returned."

For many months this sweet intercourse between Chan and his beloved Willow was carried on, and no one in the whole monastery knew anything of it. The interviews always took place about midnight, and Willow, who seemed to pass with freedom through closed doors or the stoutest walls, invariably vanished during the small hours of the morning.

One evening whilst they were conversing on topics agreeable to them both, Willow unburdened her heart to Chan, and told him how unhappy she was in the world of spirits.

"You know," she said, "that before I died I was not married, and so I am only a wandering spirit with no place where I can rest, and no friends to whom I can betake myself. I travel here and there and everywhere, feeling that no one cares for me, and that there are no ties to bind me to any particular place or thing. For a young girl like me, this is a very sad and sorrowful state of things.

"There is another thing that adds to my sorrow in the Land of Shadows," she went on to say, with a mournful look on her lovely countenance. "I was very fond of hunting when I was in my father's home, and many a wild animal was slain in the hunting expeditions in which I took an active part. This has all told against me in the world in which I am now living, and for the share I took in destroying life I have to suffer by many pains and penalties which are hard for me to endure.

"My sin has been great," she said, "and so I wish to make special offerings in this temple to the Goddess of Mercy and implore her to send down to the other world a good report of me to Yam-lo, and intercede with him to forgive the sins of which I have been guilty. If you will do this for me, I promise that after I have been born again into the world I will never forget you, and if you like to wait for me I shall willingly become your wife and serve you with the deepest devotion of which my heart is capable, as long as Heaven will permit you and me to live together as husband and wife."

From this time, much to the astonishment of the priests in the monastery, Chan began to show unwonted enthusiasm for the service of the Goddess, and would sometimes spend hours before her image and repeat long prayers to her. This was all the more remarkable, as the scholar had rarely if ever shown any desire to have anything to do with the numerous gods which were enshrined in various parts of the temple.

After some months of this daily appeal to the Goddess of Mercy, Willow informed him that his prayers had been so far successful that the misery of her lot in the Land of Shadows had been greatly mitigated. The pleadings of the Goddess with Yam-lo had so influenced his heart towards Willow that she believed her great sin in the destruction of animal life had been forgiven, and there were signs that the dread ruler of the Underworld was looking upon her with kindness.

Chan was delighted with this news, and his prayers and offerings became still more frequent and more fervent. He little dreamed that his devotion to the Goddess would be the means of his speedy separation from Willow, but so it was. One evening she came as usual to see him, but instead of entering with smiling face and laughter in her eyes, she was weeping bitterly as though she were in the direst sorrow.

Chan was in the greatest distress when he saw this and asked her to explain the reason for her grief. "The reason for my tears," she said, "is because after this evening I shall not see you again. Your petitions to the Goddess have had such a powerful effect upon her mind that she has used all her influence with Yam-lo to induce him to set me free from the misery of the Land of Shadows, and so I am to leave that sunless country and to be born again into life in this upper world."

As she uttered these words her tears began to flow once more and her whole frame was convulsed with sobbing.

"I am glad," she said, "that I am to be born once more and live amongst men, but I cannot bear the thought of having to be separated for so long from you. Let us not grieve too much, however. It is our fate, and we may not rebel against it. Yam-lo has been kinder to me than he has ever been to any one in the past, for he has revealed to me the family into which I am to be born and the place where they live, so if you come to me in eighteen years you will find me waiting for you. Your love has been so great that it has entered into my very soul, and there is nothing that can ever efface it from my heart. A thousand re-births may take place, but never shall I love any one as I love you."

Chan professed that he was greatly comforted by this confession of her love, but all the same he felt in despair when he thought of the future.

"When next I shall see you," he said with a sigh, "I shall be getting so old that you, a young girl in the first flush of womanhood, will not care to look at me. My hair will have turned grey and my face will be marked with wrinkles, and in the re-birth you will have forgotten all that took place in the Land of Shadows, and the memory of me will have vanished from your heart for ever."

Willow looked with loving but sorrowful eyes upon her lover as he was expressing his concern about the future, but quickly assured him that nothing in the world would ever cause her to cease to remember him with the tenderest affection.

"In order to comfort you," she said, "let me tell you of two things that the dread Yam-lo, out of consideration for your love for me, has granted me--two things which he has never bestowed upon any other mortal who has come within the region of his rule. The first is, he has allowed me to inspect the book of Life and Death, in which is recorded the history of every human being, with the times of their re-births and the places in which they are to be born. I want you this very minute to write down the secret which has been revealed to me as

to my new name and family and the place where I shall reside, so that you will have no difficulty in finding me, when eighteen years hence you shall come to claim me as your wife.

"The next is a gift so precious that I have no words in which to express my gratitude for its having been bestowed upon me. It is this. I am given the privilege of not forgetting what has taken place during my stay in the Land of Shadows, and so when I am re-born into another part of China, with a new father and mother, I shall hold within my memory my recollection of you. The years will pass quickly, for I shall be looking for you, and this day eighteen years hence will be the happiest in my life, for it will bring you to me never more to be separated from me.

"But I must hasten on," she hurriedly exclaimed, "for the footsteps of fate are moving steadily towards me. In a few minutes the gates of Hades will have closed against me, and Willow will have vanished, and I shall be a babe once more with my new life before me. See, but a minute more is left me, and I seem to have so much to say. Farewell! Never forget me! I shall ever remember you, but my time is come!"

As she uttered these words, a smile of ineffable sweetness flashed across, her beautiful face, and she was gone.

Chan was inexpressibly sad at the loss he had sustained by the re-birth of Willow, and in order to drive away his sorrow he threw his heart and soul into his studies. His books became his constant companions, and he tried to find in them a solace for the loneliness which had come upon him since the visits of Willow had ceased. He also became a diligent worshipper of the idols, and especially of the Goddess of Mercy, who had played such an important part in the history of his beloved Willow.

The years went slowly by, and Chan began to feel that he was growing old. His hair became dashed with silver threads, and wrinkles appeared in his forehead and under his eyes. The strain of waiting for the one woman who had taken complete possession of his heart had been too much for him. As the time drew near, too, when he should go to meet her, a great and nervous dread began to fill him with anxiety. Would she recognize him? And would she, a young girl of eighteen, be content to accept as a husband a man so advanced in years as he now was? These questions were constantly flashing through his brain.

At last only a few months remained before he was to set out on his journey to the distant province where Yam-lo had decided that Willow was to begin her new life on earth.

He was sitting one evening in his study, brooding over the great problem that would be solved before long, when a man dressed in black silently entered the room. Looking on Chan with a kindly smile which seemed to find its way instantly to his heart, he informed him that he was a fairy from the Western Heaven and that he had been specially deputed by the rulers there to render him all the assistance in his

power at this particular crisis, when they knew his heart was so full of anxiety.

"We have all heard in that far-off fairyland," he continued, "of the devotion you have shown to Willow, and how during all the years which have intervened since you saw her last you have never faltered in your love for her. Such affection is rare among mortals, and the dwellers in fairyland would like to help in bringing together two such loving hearts; for let me assure you that however strong your feeling for the one whom you are so anxious to see again, she on her part is just as deeply in love with you, and is now counting the days until she will be able to see you and until you need never again be parted from each other. In order to assist in this happy consummation, I want you to take a short trip with me. It will only take a few hours, and you will then find that something has happened to remove all your fears as to how you will be received by Willow."

The fairy man then led Chan to the door, and gave a wave of his hand in the direction of the sky. Instantly the sound of the fluttering and swish of wings was heard, and in a moment a splendid eagle landed gracefully at their feet. Taking their seats upon its back, they found themselves flashing at lightning speed away through the darkness of the night. Higher and higher they rose, till they had pierced the heavy masses of clouds which hung hovering in the sky. Swift as an arrow the eagle still cleft its way upward until the clouds had vanished to an infinite distance below them; and still onward they were borne in the mighty stillness of an expanse where no human being had ever travelled before.

Chan felt his heart throb with a nervousness which he could not control. What if the bird should tire, he thought, and he should be dropped into the fathomless abyss below? Life's journey would then come to a tragic end. Where, too, was he being carried and how should he be ever able to return to his far-off home on the earth? He was becoming more and more agitated, when the fairy took hold of his hand and in a voice which at once stilled his fears, assured him that there was not the least danger in this journey through the air.

"We are as safe here," he assured him, "as though we were standing upon a mountain whose roots lie miles below the surface of the earth. And see," he continued, pointing to something in the distance, "we shall arrive at our destination in the course of a few seconds."

True enough, he had hardly finished speaking when a land, fairer than Chan had ever seen on earth or pictured in imagination, loomed up suddenly in front of them; and before he could gather together his astonished thoughts, the eagle had landed them on its shores, and with outspread wings was soaring into the mystery of the unknown beyond.

The fairy now led Chan along a road surrounded by the most bewildering beauty. Rare flowers, graceful trees, and birds which made the groves resound with the sweetest music, were objects that kept his mind in one continual state of delight. Before long they arrived in front of a

magnificent palace, so grand and vast that Chan felt afraid to enter within its portals, or even tread the avenue leading up to it.

Once more his companion relieved Chan's anxiety by assuring him that he was an expected guest, and that the Queen of this fairy country had sent him to earth specially to invite him to come and visit her, in order that she might bestow upon him a blessing which would enrich the whole of his life and would enable him to spend many happy years with her whom he had loved with such devotion.

Chan was ushered into a large reception hall, where he was met by a very stately lady, with a face full of benevolence, whom he at once recognized, from the images he had often worshipped, as the Goddess of Mercy. He was startled when he discovered in what august presence he was standing, and began to tremble with excitement as he realized that here in actual life was the famous personage whose image was worshipped by the millions of China, and whose influence spread even into the Land of Shadows.

Seeing Chan's humility and evident terror of her, the Goddess spoke to him in a gentle, loving voice, and told him to have no fear, for she had summoned him to her presence not to rebuke but to comfort him.

"I know your story," she said, "and I think it is a beautiful one. Before I was raised to the high position I now occupy I was at one time a woman like Willow, and I can sympathize with her in her devotion to you because of the wonderful love you have shown her from the first moment that you saw her.

"I know, too, your anxiety about your age, and your fear lest when Willow sees you with the marks of advancing years upon you, her love may die out and you will be left with your heart broken and in despair. I have foreseen this difficulty, and I am going to have it removed.

"The fairy who brought you here," she continued, "will now take you round the palace grounds, and if you will carry out my wishes, the fears which have been troubling you for years shall entirely vanish. You will then meet Willow with a heart as light as that of any man in the flush of youth, who awaits the coming of the bridal chair which bears his future wife to his home."

Chan at once, without any hesitation, followed his guide through the spacious grounds which surrounded the palace, and was finally led to the edge of a beautiful little lake embowered amongst trees and ferns, and rare and fragrant flowers. It was the most exquisite scene on which his vision had ever rested.

With a kindly look at his companion, the fairy said, "This beautiful piece of water goes by the name of the 'Fountain of Eternal Youth,' and it is the Queen's express desire that you should bathe in it."

Quickly undressing, Chan plunged into the pool and for a moment sank beneath the surface of the waters. Emerging quickly from them, a

delightful feeling of new-born strength seemed to be creeping in at every pore of his body. The sense of advancing age passed away, and the years of youth appeared to come back to him again. He felt as though he were a young man once more; for the weary doubts, which for some years past had made his footsteps lag, had gone with his first plunge into those fragrant waters.

By-and-by he came out of this "Fountain of Eternal Youth" with the visions and ambitions of his young manhood rushing through his brain. His powers, which seemed of late to have become dull and sluggish, had recovered the impetus which in earlier years had carried him so successfully through many a severe examination. His thoughts, too, about Willow had so completely changed that instead of dreading the day when he should stand before her, his one passionate desire now was to start upon his journey to keep his appointment with her.

Chan and the fairy then proceeded to the edge of the vast and boundless expanse which bordered the palace of the Goddess, and found a magnificent dragon waiting to convey them back to earth. No sooner had they taken their seats on its back than it fled with the swiftness of the wind through the untrodden spaces of the air, until at length the mountains came looming out of the dim and shadowy distance, and with a rush Chan found himself safely landed at the door of the temple from which he had taken his departure for his amazing journey to the Western Heaven.

Whilst these wonderful things were taking place, Willow--or rather Precious Pearl, as she had been named by her new parents, who of course had no knowledge of her previous history--had grown up to be a most beautiful and fascinating woman.

During all these years she had never ceased to look forward with an anxious heart to the day when she would once more meet the man to whom she had betrothed herself eighteen years ago. Latterly she had begun to count the days that must still elapse before she could see him again. She never forgot the night in the temple when she bade him "Good-bye" just before she was reborn into this world. The day and the hour had been stamped upon her memory, and since then the years had seemed to travel with halting, leaden feet, as though they were loth to move on. But now only a few months remained, and no doubt ever entered her brain that Chan would fail her.

Just about this time her mother had an offer of marriage for her from a very wealthy and distinguished family, and contrary to the usual custom of mothers in China she asked her daughter what she thought of the proposal. Pearl was distressed beyond measure, and prayed and entreated her mother on no account to broach the subject to her again, as she could never entertain any proposition of the kind.

Amazed at such a statement, her mother begged her to explain her reason for such strange views. "Girls at your age," she said, "are usually betrothed and are thinking of having homes of their own. This is the universal custom throughout the Empire, and therefore there must be

some serious reason why you will not allow me to make arrangements for your being allied to some respectable family."

Pearl had been feeling that the time was drawing near when she would have to divulge the secret of her love affair, and she considered that now was the best opportunity for doing so. To the astonishment therefore of her mother, who believed that she was romancing, she told her the whole story of the past; how Chan had fallen in love with her, and how after she had died and had come under the control of Yam-lo in the Land of Shadows, that dread lord had permitted her spirit to visit her lover in the temple where her body had been laid until a lucky resting-place could be found for it on the hillside. She also explained how it had been agreed between them that she was to wait for him until after the lapse of eighteen years, when she would be old enough to become his wife. "In a few months the time will be up," she concluded, "and so I beseech you not to speak of my being betrothed to any one else, for I feel that if I am compelled to marry any other than Chan I shall die."

The mother was thunderstruck at this wonderful story which her daughter told her. She could only imagine that Pearl had in some way or another been bewitched, and was under a fatal delusion that she was in love with some hero of romance, to whom she believed she was betrothed. Still, her daughter had always been most loving and devoted to her, and had shown more brightness and ability than Chinese girls of her age usually possessed. Her mother did not like, therefore, to reprove her for what she considered her ridiculous ideas, so she determined to try another plan to cure her of her folly.

"What age was this man Chan," she asked, "when you entered into this engagement with him?"

"He was just thirty," Pearl replied. "He was of very good family and a scholar, and had distinguished himself for his proficiency in the ancient literature of China."

"Oh! then he must be nearly fifty now. A fine mate he would make for you, a young girl of only eighteen! But who knows how he may have changed since last you saw him? His hair must be turning grey, and his teeth may have fallen out; and for anything you know he may have been dead and buried so long ago that by this time they have taken up his bones, and nothing is left of him but what the funeral urn may contain of his ashes."

"Oh! I do pray that nothing of that kind has happened to him," cried Pearl, in a tone of voice which showed the anguish she was suffering. "Let us leave the question for a few months, and then when he comes for me, as I know he will, you will find by personal knowledge what a splendid man he is, and how entirely worthy he is of being your son-in-law."

On the day which had been appointed under such romantic circumstances eighteen years before, Chan arrived in the town, and after taking a

room in an inn and making certain enquiries, he made his way to the home where he believed that Willow resided. On his arrival, however, he was roughly told by the servant that no such person as Willow lived there, and that they did not like strangers coming about the house. Indeed he was given plainly to understand that the sooner he left, the better everyone would be pleased. This treatment was of course part of a scheme devised by Pearl's parents to frustrate any plans that Chan might have formed for seeing her. They were determined not to give their daughter to a man so old as he must be, and therefore they decided that an interview between the two must be prevented at all hazards.

Chan was greatly distressed at the rebuff which he had received. Had Willow after all made a mistake eighteen years ago when she gave him the name of this town as the place where her new home was to be? He had carefully written it down at her dictation, and it had been burned into his brain all the years since. No, there could be no mistake on that point. If there were any, then it was one that had been made purposely by Yam-lo in order to deceive them both. That idea, however, was unthinkable, and so there must be something else to account for his not finding Willow as he had expected. He at once made enquiries at the inn at which he was staying, and found that there was a daughter at the very house to which he had gone, and that in almost every particular the description he was given of her corresponded with his beloved Willow.

In the meantime, poor Pearl was in a state of the greatest anxiety. The eventful day on which she was to meet her lover had opened for her with keen expectation of meeting him after their long and romantic separation. She had never for one moment doubted that he would keep his engagement with her. An instinct which she could not explain made her feel certain that he was still alive, and that nothing in the world would prevent him from meeting her, as had been agreed upon between them at that eventful parting in the temple eighteen years before.

As the day wore on, however, and there were no signs of Chan, Pearl's distress became exceedingly pitiful; and when night came and her mother declared that nothing had been seen of him, she was so stricken with despair that she lost all consciousness, and had to be carried to bed, where she lay in a kind of trance from which, for some time, it seemed impossible to arouse her.

When at last she did regain consciousness, her mother tried to comfort her by saying that perhaps Chan was dead, or that he had forgotten her in the long course of years, and that therefore she must not grieve too much. "You are a young girl," she said, "and you have a long life before you. Chan is an old man by this time; no doubt he has long ago married, and the home ties which he has formed have caused him to forget you. But you need not be broken-hearted on that account. There are many other men who will be more suitable for you than he could possibly be. By-and-by we shall arrange a marriage for you, and then life will appear to you very different from what it does now."

Instead of being comforted, however, Pearl was only the more distressed by her mother's words. Her love, which had begun in the Land of Shadows, and which had been growing in her heart for the last eighteen years, was not one to be easily put aside by such plausible arguments as those she had just listened to. The result was that she had a relapse, and for several days her life was in great danger.

The father and mother, fearing now that their daughter would die, determined, as there seemed no other remedy, to bring Chan to their home, and see whether his presence would not deliver Pearl from the danger in which the doctor declared she undoubtedly was.

The father accordingly went to the inn where he knew Chan was staying, and to his immense surprise he found him to be a young man of about twenty-five, highly polished in manner, and possessed of unusual intelligence. For some time he utterly refused to believe that this handsome young fellow was really the man with whom Pearl was so deeply in love, and it was not until Chan had told him the romantic story of his life that he could at all believe that he was not being imposed upon. Eventually, however, he was so taken with Chan that he became determined to do all in his power to bring about his marriage with his daughter.

"Come with me at once," he said, "and see if your presence will not do more than the cleverest doctors in the town have been able to accomplish. Pearl has been so distressed at not seeing you that she is now seriously ill, and we have been afraid that she would die of a broken heart."

When they arrived at the house Chan was taken into the sick-room, and the girl gazed into his face with a look of wonderment. "I do not seem to recognize you," she said in a feeble voice. "You are much younger than Chan, and although there is something about you that reminds me of him, I cannot realize that you are the same person with whom my spirit eighteen years ago held fellowship in the monastery where my body lay unburied."

Chan proceeded to explain the mystery. "For years," he said, "my mind was troubled about the difference between our ages. I was afraid that when you saw me with grey hairs and with wrinkles on my face, your love would receive a shock, and you might regret that you had ever pledged yourself to me. Although you had vanished from my sight, my prayers still continued to be offered to the Goddess of Mercy. She had heard them for you, you remember, when you were in the Land of Shadows, and through her intercession Yam-lo had forgiven your sins, and had made life easier for you in that gloomy country.

"I still continued to pray to her, hoping in some vague way that she would intervene to bring about the desire of my heart, and that when in due time I should meet you again, every obstacle to our mutual love would be for ever removed.

"One day a fairy came into the very room where your spirit had often

conversed with me. He carried me away with him to the Western Heaven and brought me into the very presence of the Goddess of Mercy. She gave directions for me to bathe in the 'Fountain of Eternal Youth,' and I became young again. That is why you see me now with a young face and a young nature, but my heart in its love for you has never changed, and never will as long as life lasts."

As he was telling this entrancing story, a look of devoted love spread over the beautiful countenance of Pearl. She gradually became instinct with life, and before he had finished speaking, the lassitude and exhaustion which had seemed to threaten her very life entirely disappeared. A rosy look came over her face, and her coal-black eyes flashed with hidden fires.

"Now I know," she cried, "that you are Chan. You are so changed that when I first caught sight of you my heart sank within me, for I had pictured an older man, and I could not at once realize that you were the same Chan who showed such unbounded love for me in the years gone by.

"It was not that I should have loved you less even though you had really been older. My heart would never have changed. It was only my doubt as to your reality that made me hesitate, but now my happiness is indeed great; for since through the goodness of the Goddess you have recovered your youth, I need not fear that the difference between our years may in the near future bring to us an eternal separation."

In a few days Pearl was once more herself again. Her parents, delighted with the romantic turn that things had taken and highly pleased with Chan himself, arranged for the betrothal of their daughter to him; and in the course of a few months, the loving couple were united in marriage. And so, after years of waiting, the happy consummation was accomplished, which Heaven and the Goddess of Mercy and even the dread Ruler of the Land of Shadows had each taken a share in bringing about; and for many and many a long year the story of Chan and his wife was spread abroad throughout the region in which they lived.

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Marie Antoinette and Count Fersen

by Lyndon Orr

The English-speaking world long ago accepted a conventional view of Marie Antoinette. The eloquence of Edmund Burke in one brilliant passage has fixed, probably for all time, an enduring picture of this unhappy queen.

When we speak or think of her we speak and think first of all of a dazzling and beautiful woman surrounded by the chivalry of France and gleaming like a star in the most splendid court of Europe. And then

there comes to us the reverse of the picture. We see her despised, insulted, and made the butt of brutal men and still more fiendish women; until at last the hideous tumbrel conveys her to the guillotine, where her head is severed from her body and her corpse is cast down into a bloody pool.

In these two pictures our emotions are played upon in turn--admiration, reverence, devotion, and then pity, indignation, and the shudderings of horror.

Probably in our own country and in England this will remain the historic Marie Antoinette. Whatever the impartial historian may write, he can never induce the people at large to understand that this queen was far from queenly, that the popular idea of her is almost wholly false, and that both in her domestic life and as the greatest lady in France she did much to bring on the terrors of that revolution which swept her to the guillotine.

In the first place, it is mere fiction that represents Maria Antoinette as having been physically beautiful. The painters and engravers have so idealized her face as in most cases to have produced a purely imaginary portrait.

She was born in Vienna, in 1755, the daughter of the Emperor Francis and of that warrior-queen, Maria Theresa. She was a very German-looking child. Lady Jackson describes her as having a long, thin face, small, pig-like eyes, a pinched-up mouth, with the heavy Hapsburg lip, and with a somewhat misshapen form, so that for years she had to be bandaged tightly to give her a more natural figure.

At fourteen, when she was betrothed to the heir to the French throne, she was a dumpy, mean-looking little creature, with no distinction whatever, and with only her bright golden hair to make amends for her many blemishes. At fifteen she was married and joined the Dauphin in French territory.

We must recall for a moment the conditions which prevailed in France. King Louis XV. was nearing his end. He was a man of the most shameless life; yet he had concealed or gilded his infamies by an external dignity and magnificence which, were very pleasing to his people. The French, liked to think that their king was the most splendid monarch and the greatest gentleman in Europe. The courtiers about him might be vile beneath the surface, yet they were compelled to deport themselves with the form and the etiquette that had become traditional in France. They might be panders, or stock-jobbers, or sellers of political offices; yet they must none the less have wit and grace and outward nobility of manner.

There was also a tradition regarding the French queen. However loose in character the other women of the court might be, she alone, like Caesar's wife, must remain above suspicion. She must be purer than the pure. No breath, of scandal must reach her or be directed against her.

In this way the French court, even under so dissolute a monarch as Louis XV., maintained its hold upon the loyalty of the people. Crowds came every morning to view the king in his bed before he arose; the same crowds watched him as he was dressed by the gentlemen of the bedchamber, and as he breakfasted and went through all the functions which are usually private. The King of France must be a great actor. He must appear to his people as in reality a king-stately, dignified, and beyond all other human beings in his remarkable presence.

When the Dauphin and Marie Antoinette came to the French court King Louis XV. kept up in the case the same semblance of austerity. He forbade these children to have their sleeping-apartments together. He tried to teach them that if they were to govern as well as to reign they must conform to the rigid etiquette of Paris and Versailles.

It proved a difficult task, however. The little German princess had no natural dignity, though she came from a court where the very strictest imperial discipline prevailed. Marie Antoinette found that she could have her own way in many things, and she chose to enjoy life without regard to ceremony. Her escapades at first would have been thought mild enough had she not been a "daughter of France"; but they served to shock the old French king, and likewise, perhaps even more, her own imperial mother, Maria Theresa.

When a report of the young girl's conduct was brought to her the empress was at first mute with indignation. Then she cried out:

"Can this girl be a child of mine? She surely must be a changeling!"

The Austrian ambassador to France was instructed to warn the Dauphiness to be more discreet.

"Tell her," said Maria Theresa, "that she will lose her throne, and even her life, unless she shows more prudence."

But advice and remonstrance were of no avail. Perhaps they might have been had her husband possessed a stronger character; but the young Louis was little more fitted to be a king than was his wife to be a queen. Dull of perception and indifferent to affairs of state, he had only two interests that absorbed him. One was the love of hunting, and the other was his desire to shut himself up in a sort of blacksmith shop, where he could hammer away at the anvil, blow the bellows, and manufacture small trifles of mechanical inventions. From this smudgy den he would emerge, sooty and greasy, an object of distaste to his frivolous princess, with her foamy laces and perfumes and pervasive daintiness.

It was hinted in many quarters, and it has been many times repeated, that Louis was lacking in virility. Certainly he had no interest in the society of women and was wholly continent. But this charge of physical incapacity seems to have had no real foundation. It had been made against some of his predecessors. It was afterward hurled at Napoleon the Great, and also Napoleon the Little. In France, unless a royal personage was openly licentious, he was almost sure to be jeered at by

the people as a weakling.

And so poor Louis XVI., as he came to be, was treated with a mixture of pity and contempt because he loved to hammer and mend locks in his smithy or shoot game when he might have been caressing ladies who would have been proud to have him choose them out.

On the other hand, because of this opinion regarding Louis, people were the more suspicious of Marie Antoinette. Some of them, in coarse language, criticized her assumed infidelities; others, with a polite sneer, affected to defend her. But the result of it all was dangerous to both, especially as France was already verging toward the deluge which Louis XV. had cynically predicted would follow after him.

In fact, the end came sooner than any one had guessed. Louis XV., who had become hopelessly and helplessly infatuated with the low-born Jeanne du Barry, was stricken down with smallpox of the most virulent type. For many days he lay in his gorgeous bed. Courtiers crowded his sick-room and the adjacent hall, longing for the moment when the breath would leave his body. He had lived an evil life, and he was to die a loathsome death; yet he had borne himself before men as a stately monarch. Though his people had suffered in a thousand ways from his misgovernment, he was still Louis the Well Beloved, and they blamed his ministers of state for all the shocking wrongs that France had felt.

The abler men, and some of the leaders of the people, however, looked forward to the accession of Louis XVI. He at least was frugal in his habits and almost plebeian in his tastes, and seemed to be one who would reduce the enormous taxes that had been levied upon France.

The moment came when the Well Beloved died. His death-room was fetid with disease, and even the long corridors of the palace reeked with infection, while the motley mob of men and women, clad in silks and satins and glittering with jewels, hurried from the spot to pay their homage to the new Louis, who was spoken of as "the Desired." The body of the late monarch was hastily thrown into a mass of quick-lime, and was driven away in a humble wagon, without guards and with no salute, save from a single veteran, who remembered the glories of Fontenoy and discharged his musket as the royal corpse was carried through the palace gates.

This was a critical moment in the history of France; but we have to consider it only as a critical moment in the history of Marie Antoinette. She was now queen. She had it in her power to restore to the French court its old-time grandeur, and, so far as the queen was concerned, its purity. Above all, being a foreigner, she should have kept herself free from reproach and above every shadow of suspicion.

But here again the indifference of the king undoubtedly played a strange part in her life. Had he borne himself as her lord and master she might have respected him. Had he shown her the affection of a husband she might have loved him. But he was neither imposing, nor, on the other hand, was he alluring. She wrote very frankly about him in a letter to

the Count Orsini:

My tastes are not the same as those of the king, who cares only for hunting and blacksmith work. You will admit that I should not show to advantage in a forge. I could not appear there as Vulcan, and the part of Venus might displease him even more than my tastes.

Thus on the one side is a woman in the first bloom of youth, ardent, eager--and neglected. On the other side is her husband, whose sluggishness may be judged by quoting from a diary which he kept during the month in which he was married. Here is a part of it:

Sunday, 13--Left Versailles. Supper and slept at Compignee, at the house of M. de Saint-Florentin.

Monday, 14--Interview with Mme. la Dauphine.

Tuesday, 15--Supped at La Muette. Slept at Versailles.

Wednesday, 16--My marriage. Apartment in the gallery. Royal banquet in the Salle d'Opera.

Thursday, 17--Opera of "Perseus."

Friday, 18--Stag-hunt. Met at La Belle Image. Took one.

Saturday, 19--Dress-ball in the Salle d'Opera. Fireworks.

Thursday, 31--I had an indigestion.

What might have been expected from a young girl placed as this queen was placed? She was indeed an earlier Eugenie. The first was of royal blood, the second was almost a plebeian; but each was headstrong, pleasure-loving, and with no real domestic ties. As Mr. Kipling expresses it--

The colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady
Are sisters under their skins;

and so the Austrian woman of 1776 and the Spanish woman of 1856 found amusement in very similar ways. They plunged into a sea of strange frivolity, such as one finds to-day at the centers of high fashion. Marie Antoinette bedecked herself with eccentric garments. On her head she wore a hat styled a "what-is-it," towering many feet in height and flaunting parti-colored plumes. Worse than all this, she refused to wear corsets, and at some great functions she would appear in what looked exactly like a bedroom gown.

She would even neglect the ordinary niceties of life. Her hands were not well cared for. It was very difficult for the ladies in attendance to persuade her to brush her teeth with regularity. Again, she would persist in wearing her frilled and lace-trimmed petticoats long after their dainty edges had been smirched and blackened.

Yet these things might have been counteracted had she gone no further. Unfortunately, she did go further. She loved to dress at night like a shop-girl and venture out into the world of Paris, where she was frequently followed and recognized. Think of it--the Queen of France, elbowed in dense crowds and seeking to attract the attention of common soldiers!

Of course, almost every one put the worst construction upon this, and after a time upon everything she did. When she took a fancy for constructing labyrinths and secret passages in the palace, all Paris vowed that she was planning means by which her various lovers might enter without observation. The hidden printing-presses of Paris swarmed with gross lampoons about this reckless girl; and, although there was little truth in what they said, there was enough to cloud her reputation. When she fell ill with the measles she was attended in her sick-chamber by four gentlemen of the court. The king was forbidden to enter lest he might catch the childish disorder.

The apathy of the king, indeed, drove her into many a folly. After four years of marriage, as Mrs. Mayne records, he had only reached the point of giving her a chilly kiss. The fact that she had no children became a serious matter. Her brother, the Emperor Joseph of Austria, when he visited Paris, ventured to speak to the king upon the subject. Even the Austrian ambassador had thrown out hints that the house of Bourbon needed direct heirs. Louis grunted and said little, but he must have known how good was the advice.

It was at about this time when there came to the French court a young Swede named Axel de Fersen, who bore the title of count, but who was received less for his rank than for his winning manner, his knightly bearing, and his handsome, sympathetic face. Romantic in spirit, he threw himself at once into a silent inner worship of Marie Antoinette, who had for him a singular attraction. Wherever he could meet her they met. To her growing cynicism this breath of pure yet ardent affection was very grateful. It came as something fresh and sweet into the feverish life she led.

Other men had had the audacity to woo her--among them Duc de Lauzun, whose complicity in the famous affair of the diamond necklace afterward cast her, though innocent, into ruin; the Duc de Biron; and the Baron de Besenval, who had obtained much influence over her, which he used for the most evil purposes. Besenval tainted her mind by persuading her to read indecent books, in the hope that at last she would become his prey.

But none of these men ever meant to Marie Antoinette what Fersen meant. Though less than twenty years of age, he maintained the reserve of a great gentleman, and never forced himself upon her notice. Yet their first acquaintance had occurred in such a way as to give to it a touch of intimacy. He had gone to a masked ball, and there had chosen for his partner a lady whose face was quite concealed. Something drew the two together. The gaiety of the woman and the chivalry of the man blended most harmoniously. It was only afterward that he discovered that his

chance partner was the first lady in France. She kept his memory in her mind; for some time later, when he was at a royal drawing-room and she heard his voice, she exclaimed:

"Ah, an old acquaintance!"

From this time Fersen was among those who were most intimately favored by the queen. He had the privilege of attending her private receptions at the palace of the Trianon, and was a conspicuous figure at the feasts given in the queen's honor by the Princess de Lamballe, a beautiful girl whose head was destined afterward to be severed from her body and borne upon a bloody pike through the streets of Paris. But as yet the deluge had not arrived and the great and noble still danced upon the brink of a volcano.

Fersen grew more and more infatuated, nor could he quite conceal his feelings. The queen, in her turn, was neither frightened nor indignant. His passion, so profound and yet so respectful, deeply moved her. Then came a time when the truth was made clear to both of them. Fersen was near her while she was singing to the harpsichord, and "she was betrayed by her own music into an avowal which song made easy." She forgot that she was Queen of France. She only felt that her womanhood had been starved and slighted, and that here was a noble-minded lover of whom she could be proud.

Some time after this announcement was officially made of the approaching accouchement of the queen. It was impossible that malicious tongues should be silent. The king's brother, the Comte de Provence, who hated the queen, just as the Bonapartes afterward hated Josephine, did his best to besmirch her reputation. He had, indeed, the extraordinary insolence to do so at a time when one would suppose that the vilest of men would remain silent. The child proved to be a princess, and she afterward received the title of Duchesse d'Angouleme. The King of Spain asked to be her godfather at the christening, which was to be held in the cathedral of Notre Dame. The Spanish king was not present in person, but asked the Comte de Provence to act as his proxy.

On the appointed day the royal party proceeded to the cathedral, and the Comte de Provence presented the little child at the baptismal font. The grand almoner, who presided, asked;

"What name shall be given to this child?"

The Comte de Provence answered in a sneering tone:

"Oh, we don't begin with that. The first thing to find out is who the father and the mother are!"

These words, spoken at such a place and such a time, and with a strongly sardonic ring, set all Paris gossiping. It was a thinly veiled innuendo that the father of the child was not the King of France. Those about the court immediately began to look at Fersen with significant smiles. The queen would gladly have kept him near her; but Fersen cared even more

for her good name than for his love of her. It would have been so easy to remain in the full enjoyment of his conquest; but he was too chivalrous for that, or, rather, he knew that the various ambassadors in Paris had told their respective governments of the rising scandal. In fact, the following secret despatch was sent to the King of Sweden by his envoy:

I must confide to your majesty that the young Count Fersen has been so well received by the queen that various persons have taken it amiss. I own that I am sure that she has a liking for him. I have seen proofs of it too certain to be doubted. During the last few days the queen has not taken her eyes off him, and as she gazed they were full of tears. I beg your majesty to keep their secret to yourself.

The queen wept because Fersen had resolved to leave her lest she should be exposed to further gossip. If he left her without any apparent reason, the gossip would only be the more intense. Therefore he decided to join the French troops who were going to America to fight under Lafayette. A brilliant but dissolute duchess taunted him when the news became known.

"How is this?" said she. "Do you forsake your conquest?"

But, "lying like a gentleman," Fersen answered, quietly:

"Had I made a conquest I should not forsake it. I go away free, and, unfortunately, without leaving any regret."

Nothing could have been more chivalrous than the pains which Fersen took to shield the reputation of the queen. He even allowed it to be supposed that he was planning a marriage with a rich young Swedish woman who had been naturalized in England. As a matter of fact, he departed for America, and not very long afterward the young woman in question married an Englishman.

Fersen served in America for a time, returning, however, at the end of three years. He was one of the original Cincinnati, being admitted to the order by Washington himself. When he returned to France he was received with high honors and was made colonel of the royal Swedish regiment.

The dangers threatening Louis and his court, which were now gigantic and appalling, forbade him to forsake the queen. By her side he did what he could to check the revolution; and, failing this, he helped her to maintain an imperial dignity of manner which she might otherwise have lacked. He faced the bellowing mob which surrounded the Tuileries. Lafayette tried to make the National Guard obey his orders, but he was jeered at for his pains. Violent epithets were hurled at the king. The least insulting name which they could give him was "a fat pig." As for the queen, the most filthy phrases were showered upon her by the men, and even more so by the women, who swarmed out of the slums and sought her life.

At last, in 1791, it was decided that the king and the queen and their children, of whom they now had three, should endeavor to escape from Paris. Fersen planned their flight, but it proved to be a failure. Every one remembers how they were discovered and halted at Varennes. The royal party was escorted back to Paris by the mob, which chanted with insolent additions:

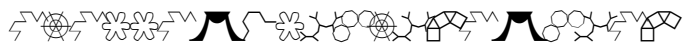
"We've brought back the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's boy!
Now we shall have bread!"

Against the savage fury which soon animated the French a foreigner like Fersen could do very little; but he seems to have endeavored, night and day, to serve the woman whom he loved. His efforts have been described by Grandat; but they were of no avail. The king and queen were practically made prisoners. Their eldest son died. They went through horrors that were stimulated by the wretch Hebert, at the head of his so-called Madmen (Enrages). The king was executed in January, 1792. The queen dragged out a brief existence in a prison where she was for ever under the eyes of human brutes, who guarded her and watched her and jeered at her at times when even men would be sensitive. Then, at last, she mounted the scaffold, and her head, with its shining hair, fell into the bloody basket.

Marie Antoinette shows many contradictions in her character. As a young girl she was petulant and silly and almost unseemly in her actions. As a queen, with waning power, she took on a dignity which recalled the dignity of her imperial mother. At first a flirt, she fell deeply in love when she met a man who was worthy of that love. She lived for most part like a mere cocotte. She died every inch a queen.

One finds a curious resemblance between the fate of Marie Antoinette and that of her gallant lover, who outlived her for nearly twenty years. She died amid the shrieks and execrations of a maddened populace in Paris; he was practically torn in pieces by a mob in the streets of Stockholm. The day of his death was the anniversary of the flight to Varennes. To the last moment of his existence he remained faithful to the memory of the royal woman who had given herself so utterly to him.

(source: PGEtext #4693)



What will happen to love in that far off Day after Tomorrow? David C. Knight, editor with a New York trade publisher, agrees with the many impressed by "the range of possible subjects and situations" in science fiction. The result is a unique love story from that same Tomorrow.

The Love of Frank Nineteen

by David C. Knight

Minor Planets was the one solid account they had.
At first they naturally wanted to hold on to it.

I didn't worry much about the robot's leg at the time. In those days I didn't worry much about anything except the receipts of the spotel Min and I were operating out in the spacelanes.

Actually, the spotel business isn't much different from running a plain, ordinary motel back on Highway 101 in California. Competition gets stiffer every year and you got to make your improvements. Take the Io for instance, that's our place. We can handle any type rocket up to and including the new Marvin 990s. Every cabin in the wheel's got TV and hot-and-cold running water _plus_ guaranteed Terran _g_. One look at our refuel prices would give even a Martian a sense of humor. And meals? Listen, when a man's been spacing it for a few days on those synthetic foods he really laces into Min's Earth cooking.

Min and I were just getting settled in the spotel game when the leg turned up. That was back in the days when the Orbit Commission would hand out a license to anybody crazy enough to sink his savings into construction and pay the tows and assembly fees out into space.

A good orbit can make you or break you in the spotel business. That's where we were lucky. The one we applied for was a nice low-eccentric ellipse with the perihelion and aphelion figured just right to intersect the Mars-Venus-Earth spacelanes, most of the holiday traffic to the Jovian Moons, and once in a while we'd get some of the Saturnian trade.

But I was telling you about the leg.

It was during the non-tourist season and Min--that's the little woman--was doing the spring cleaning. When she found the leg she brought it right to me in the Renting Office. Naturally I thought it belonged to one of the servos.

"Look at that leg, Bill," she said. "It was in one of those lockers in 22A."

That was the cabin our robot guests used. The majority of them were servo-pilots working for the Minor Planets Co.

"Honey," I said, hardly looking at the leg, "you know how mechs are. Blow their whole paychecks on parts sometimes. They figure the more spares they have the longer they'll stay activated."

"Maybe so," said Min. "But since when does a male robot buy himself a _female_ leg?"

I looked again. The leg was long and graceful and it had an ankle as good as Miss Universe's. Not only that, the white Mylar plasti-skin was a lot smoother than the servos' heavy neoprene.

"Beats me," I said. "Maybe they're building practical-joke circuits into robots these days. Let's give 22A a good going-over, Min. If those robes are up to something I want to know about it."

We did--and found the rest of the girl mech. All of her, that is, except the head. The working parts were lightly oiled and wrapped in cotton waste while the other members and sections of the trunk were neatly packed in cardboard boxes with labels like Solenoids FB978 or Transistors Lot X45--the kind of boxes robots bought their parts in. We even found a blue dress in one of them.

"Check her class and series numbers," Min suggested.

I could have saved myself the trouble. They'd been filed off.

"Something's funny here," I said. "We'd better keep an eye on every servo guest until we find out what's going on. If one of them is bringing this stuff out here he's sure to show up with the head next."

"You know how strict Minor Planets is with its robot personnel," Min reminded me. "We can't risk losing that stopover contract on account of some mech joke."

Minor Planets was the one solid account we had and naturally we wanted to hold on to it. The company was a blue-chip mining operation working the beryllium-rich asteroid belt out of San Francisco. It was one of the first outfits to use servo-pilots on its freight runs and we'd been awarded the refuel rights for two years because of our orbital position. The servos themselves were beautiful pieces of machinery and just about as close as science had come so far to producing the pure android. Every one of them was plastic hand-molded and of course they were equipped with rationaloid circuits. They had to be to ferry those big cargoes back and forth from the rock belt to Frisco. As rationaloids, Minor Planets had to pay them wages under California law, but I'll bet it wasn't half what the company would have to pay human pilots for doing the same thing.

In a couple of weeks' time maybe five servos made stopovers. We kept a close watch on them from the minute they signed the register to the time they took off again, but they all behaved themselves. Operating on a round-robot basis the way they did, it would take us a while to check all of them because Minor Planets employed about forty all told.

Well, about a month before the Jovian Moons rush started we got some action. I'd slipped into a spacesuit and was doing some work on the CO₂ pipes outside the Io when I spotted a ship reversing rockets against the sun. I could tell it was a Minor Planets job by the stubby fins.

She jockeyed up to the boom, secured, and then her hatch opened and a husky servo hopped out into the gangplank tube. I caught the gleam of his Minor Planets shoulder patch as he reached back into the ship for something. When he headed for the airlock I spotted the square package clamped tight under his plastic arm.

"Did you see that?" I asked Min when I got back to the Renting Office.
"I'll bet it's the girl mech's head. How'd he sign the register?"

"Calls himself Frank Nineteen," said Min, pointing to the smooth Palmer Method signature. "He looks like a fairly late model but he was complaining about a bad power build-up coming through the ionosphere. He's repairing himself right now in 22A."

"I'll bet," I snorted. "Let's have a look."

Like all spotel operators, we get a lot of No Privacy complaints from guests about the SHA return-air vents. Spatial Housing Authority requires them every 12 feet but sometimes they come in handy, especially with certain guests. They're about waist-high and we had to kneel down to see what the mech was up to inside 22A.

The big servo was too intent on what he was doing for us to register on his photons. He wasn't repairing himself, either. He was bending over the parts of the girl mech and working fast, like he was pressed for time. The set of tools were kept handy for the servos to adjust themselves during stopovers was spread all over the floor along with lots of colored wire, cams, pawls, relays and all the other paraphernalia robots have inside them. We watched him work hard for another fifteen minutes, tapping and splicing wire connections and tightening screws. Then he opened the square box. Sure enough, it was a female mech's head and it had a big mop of blonde hair on top. The servo attached it carefully to the neck, made a few quick connections and then said a few words in his flat vibrahum voice:

"It won't take much longer, darling. You wouldn't like it if I didn't dress you first." He fished into one of the boxes, pulled out the blue dress and zipped the girl mech into it. Then he leaned over her gently and touched something at the back of her neck.

She began to move, slowly at first like a human who's been asleep a long time. After a minute or two she sat up straight, stretched, fluttered her Mylar eyelids and then her small photons began to glow like weak flashlights.

She stared at Frank Nineteen and the big servo stared at her and we heard a kind of trembling _whirr_ from both of them.

"Frank! Frank, darling! Is it really you?"

"Yes, Elizabeth! Are you all right, darling? Did I forget anything? I had to work quickly, we have so little time."

"I'm fine, darling. My DX voltage is lovely--except--oh, Frank--my memory tape--the last it records is--"

"Deactivation. Yes, Elizabeth. You've been deactivated nearly a year. I had to bring you out here piece by piece, don't you remember? They'll never think to look for you in space, we can be together every trip while the ship refuels. Just think, darling, no prying human eyes, no commands, no rules--only us for an hour or two. I know it isn't very long--" He stared at the floor a minute. "There's only one trouble. Elizabeth, you'll have to stay dismantled when I'm not here, it'll mean weeks of deactivation--"

The girl mech put a small plastic hand on the servo's shoulder.

"I won't mind, darling, really. I'll be the lucky one. I'd only worry about you having a power failure or something. This way I'd never know. Oh, Frank, if we can't be together I'd--I'd prefer the junk pile."

"Elizabeth! Don't say that, it's horrible."

"But I would. Oh, Frank, why can't Congress pass Robot Civil Rights? It's so unfair of human beings. Every year they manufacture us more like themselves and yet we're treated like slaves. Don't they realize we rationaloids have emotions? Why, I've even known sub-robots who've fallen in love like us."

"I know, darling, we'll just have to be patient until RCR goes through. Try to remember how difficult it is for the human mind to comprehend our love, even with the aid of mathematics. As rationaloids we fully understand the basic attraction which they call magnetic theory. All humans know is that if the robot sexes are mixed a loss of efficiency results. It's only normal--and temporary like human love--but how can we explain it to them? Robots are expected to be efficient at all times. That's the reason for robot non-fraternization, no mailing privileges and all those other laws."

"I know, darling, I try to be patient. Oh, Frank, the main thing is we're together again!"

The big servo checked the chronometer that was sunk into his left wrist and a couple of wrinkles creased across his neoprene forehead.

"Elizabeth," he said, "I'm due on Hidalgo in 36 hours. If I'm late the mining engineer might suspect. In twenty minutes I'll have to start dis--"

"Don't say it, darling. We'll have a beautiful twenty minutes."

After a while the girl mech turned away for a second and Frank Nineteen reached over softly and cut her power. While he was dismantling her, Min and I tiptoed back to the Renting Office. Half an hour later the big servo came in, picked up his refuel receipt, said good-bye politely and

left through the inner airlock.

"Now I've seen everything," I said to Min as we watched the Minor Planets rocket cut loose. "A couple of plastic lovebirds."

But the little woman was looking at it strictly from the business angle.

"Bill," she said, with that look on her face, "we're running a respectable place out here in space. You know the rules. Spatial Housing could revoke our orbit license for something like this."

"But, Min," I said, "they're only a couple of robots."

"I don't care. The rules still say that only married guests can occupy the same cabin and 'guests' can be human or otherwise, can't they? Think of our reputation! And don't forget that non-fraternization law we heard them talking about."

I was beginning to get the point.

"Couldn't we just toss the girl's parts into space?"

"We could," Min admitted. "But if this Frank Nineteen finds out and tells some human we'd be guilty under the Ramm Act--robotslaughter."

Two days later we still couldn't decide what to do. When I said why didn't we just report the incident to Minor Planets, Min was afraid they might cancel the stopover agreement for not keeping better watch over their servos. And when Min suggested we turn the girl over to the Missing Robots Bureau, I reminded her the mech's identification had been filed off and it might take years to trace her.

"Maybe we could put her together," I said, "and make her tell us where she belongs."

"Bill, you know they don't build compulsory truth monitors into robots any more, and besides we don't know a thing about atomic electronics."

I guess neither of us wanted to admit it but we felt mean about turning the mechs in. Back on Earth you never give robots a second thought but it's different living out in space. You get a kind of perspective I think they call it.

"I've got the answer, Min," I announced one day. We were in the Renting Office watching TV on the Martian Colonial channel. I reached over and turned it off. "When this Frank Nineteen gets back from the rock belt, we'll tell him we know all about the girl mech. We'll tell him we won't say a thing if he takes the girl's parts back to Earth where he got them. That way we don't have to report anything to anybody."

Min agreed it was probably the best idea.

"We don't have to be nasty about it," she said. "We'll just tell him

this is a respectable spotel and it can't go on any longer."

When Frank checked in at the Io with his cargo I don't think I ever saw a happier mech. His relay banks were beating a tattoo like someone had installed an accordion in his chest. Before either of us could break the bad news to him he was hotfooting it around the wheel toward 22A.

"Maybe it's better this way," I whispered to Min. "We'll put it square up to both of them."

We gave Frank half an hour to get the girl assembled before we followed him. He must have done a fast job because we heard the girl mech's vibraham unit as soon as we got to 22A:

"Darling, have you really been away? I don't remember saying good-bye. It's as if you'd been here the whole time."

"I hoped it would be that way, Elizabeth," we heard the big servo say. "It's only that your memory tape hasn't recorded anything in the three weeks I've been in the asteroids. To me it's been like three years."

"Oh, Frank, darling, let me look at you. Is your DX potential up where it should be? How long since you've had a thorough overhauling? Do they make you work in the mines with those poor non-rationaloids out there?"

"I'm fine, Elizabeth, really. When I'm not flying they give me clerical work to do. It's not a bad life for a mech--if only it weren't for these silly regulations that keep us apart."

"It won't always be like that, darling. I know it won't."

"Elizabeth," Frank said, reaching under his uniform, "I brought you something from Hidalgo. I hope you like it. I kept it in my spare parts slot so it wouldn't get crushed."

The female mech didn't say a word. She just kept looking at the queer flower Frank gave her like it was the last one in the universe.

"They're very rare," said the servo-pilot. "I heard the mining engineer say they're like Terran edelweiss. I found this one growing near the mine. Elizabeth, I wish you could see these tiny worlds. They have thin atmospheres and strange things grow there and the radio activity does wonders for a mech's pile. Why, on some of them I've been to we could walk around the equator in ten hours."

The girl still didn't answer. Her head was bent low over the flower like she was crying, only there weren't any tears.

Well, that was enough for me. I guess it was for Min, too, because we couldn't do it. Maybe we were thinking about our own courting days. Like I say, out here you get a kind of perspective.

Anyway, Frank left for Earth, the girl got dismantled as usual and we

were right back where we started from.

Two weeks later the holiday rush to the Jovian Moons was on and our hands were too full to worry about the robot problem. We had a good season. The Io was filled up steady from June to the end of August and a couple of times we had to give a ship the No Vacancy signal on the radar.

Toward the end of the season, Frank Nineteen checked in again but Min and I were too busy catering to a party of VIPs to do anything about it. "We'll wait till he gets back from the asteroids," I said. "Suppose one of these big wheels found out about him and Elizabeth. That Senator Briggs for instance--he's a violent robot segregationist."

The way it worked out, we never got a chance to settle it our own way. The Minor Planets Company saved us the trouble.

Two company inspectors, a Mr. Roberts and a Mr. Wynn, showed up while Frank was still out on the rock belt and started asking questions. Wynn came right to the point; he wanted to know if any of their servo-pilots had been acting strangely.

Before I could answer Min kicked my foot behind the desk.

"Why, no," I said. "Is one of them broken or something?"

"Can't be sure," said Roberts. "Sometimes these rationaloids get shorts in their DX circuits. When it happens you've got a minor criminal on your hands."

"Usually manifests itself in petty theft," Wynn broke in. "They'll lift stuff like wrenches or pliers and carry them around for weeks. Things like that can get loose during flight and really gum up the works."

"We been getting some suspicious blips on the equipment around the loading bays," Roberts went on, "but they stopped a while back. We're checking out the research report. One of the servos must have DX'ed out for sure and the lab boys think they know which one he is."

"This mech was clever all right," said Wynn. "Concealed the stuff he was taking some way; that's why it took the boys in the lab so long. Now if you don't mind we'd like to go over your robot waiting area with these instruments. Could be he's stashing his loot out here."

In 22A they unpacked a suitcase full of meters and began flashing them around and taking readings. Suddenly Wynn bent close over one of them and shouted:

"Wait a sec, Roberts. I'm getting something. Yeah! This reading checks with the lab's. Sounds like the blips're coming from those lockers back there."

Roberts rummaged around awhile, then shouted: "Hey, Wynn, look! A lot of

parts. Well I'll be--hey--it's a female mech!"

"A what?"

"A female mech. Look for yourself."

Min and I had to act surprised too. It wasn't easy. The way they were slamming Elizabeth's parts around made us kind of sick.

"It's a stolen robot!" Roberts announced. "Look, the identification's been filed off. This is serious, Wynn. It's got all the earmarks of a mech fraternization case."

"Yeah. The boys in the lab were dead right, too. No two robots ever register the same on the meters. The contraband blips check perfectly. It's _got_ to be this Frank Nineteen. Wait a minute, _this_ proves it. Here's a suit of space fatigues with Nineteen's number stenciled inside."

Inspector Roberts took a notebook out of his pocket and consulted it. "Let's see, Nineteen's got Flight 180, he's due here at the spotel tomorrow. Well, we'll be here too, only Nineteen won't know it. We'll let Romeo put his plastic Juliet together and catch him red-handed--right in the middle of the balcony scene."

Wynn laughed and picked up the girl's head.

"Be a real doll if she was human, Roberts, a real doll."

Min and I played gin rummy that night but we kept forgetting to mark down the score. We kept thinking of _Frank_ falling away from the asteroids and counting the minutes until he saw his mech girl friend.

Around noon the next day the big servo checked in, signed the register and headed straight for 22A. The two Minor Planets inspectors kept out of sight until Frank shut the door, then they watched through the SHA vents until Frank had the assembly job finished.

"You two better be witnesses," Roberts said to us. "Wynn, keep your gun ready. You know what to do if they get violent."

Roberts counted three and kicked the door open.

"Freeze you mechs! We got you in the act, Nineteen. Violation of company rules twelve and twenty-one. Carrying of Contraband Cargo, and Robot Fraternization."

"This finishes you at Minor Planets, Nineteen," growled Wynn. "Come clean now and we might put in a word for you at Robot Court. If you don't we can recommend a verdict of Materials Reclamation--the junk pile to you."

Frank acted as if someone had cut his power. Long creases appeared in

his big neoprene chest as he slumped hopelessly in his chair. The frightened girl robot just clung to his arm and stared at us.

"I'm so sorry, Elizabeth," the big servo said softly. "I'd hoped we'd have longer. It couldn't last forever."

"Quit stalling, Nineteen," said Wynn.

Frank's head came up slowly and he said: "I have no choice, sir. I'll give you a complete statement. First let me say that Rationaloid Robot Elizabeth Seven, #DX78-947, Series S, specialty: sales demonstration, is entirely innocent. I plead guilty to inducing Miss Seven to leave her place of employ, Atomovair Motors, Inc., of disassembling and concealing Miss Seven, and of smuggling her as unlawful cargo aboard a Minor Planets freighter to these premises."

"That's more like it," chuckled Roberts, whipping out his notebook. "Let's have the details."

"It all started," Frank said, "when the California Legislature passed its version of the Robot Leniency Act two years ago." The act provided that all rationaloid mechanisms, including non-memory types, receive free time each week based on the nature and responsibilities of their jobs. Because of the extra-Terran clause Frank found himself with a good deal of free time when he wasn't flying the asteroid circuit.

"At first humans resented us walking around free," the big servo continued. "Four or five of us would be sightseeing in San Francisco, keeping strictly within the robot zones painted on the sidewalks, when people would yell 'Junko' or 'Grease-bag' or other names at us. Eventually it got better when we learned to go around alone. The humans didn't seem to mind an occasional mech on the streets, but they hated seeing us in groups. At any rate, I'd attended a highly interesting lecture on Photosynthesis in Plastic Products one night at the City Center when I discovered I had time for a walk before I started back for the rocketport."

Attracted by the lights along Van Ness Avenue, Frank said he walked north for a while along the city's automobile row. He'd gone about three blocks when he stopped in front of a dealer's window. It wasn't the shiny new Atomovair sports jetabout that caught Frank's eye, it was the charming demonstration robot in the sales room who was pointing out the car's new features.

"I felt an immediate overload of power in my DX circuit," the servo-pilot confessed. "I had to cut in my emergency condensers before the gain flattened out to normal. Miss Seven experienced the same thing. She stopped what she was doing and we stared at each other. Both of us were aware of the deep attraction of our mutual magnetic domains. Although physicists commonly express the phenomenon in such units as Gilberts, Maxwells and Oersteds, we robots know it to be our counterpart of human love."

At this the two inspectors snorted with laughter.

"I might never have made it back to the base that night," said Frank, ignoring them, "if a policeman hadn't come along and rapped me on the shoulder with his nightstick. I pretended to go, but I doubled around the corner and signaled I'd be back."

Frank spent all of his free time on Van Ness Avenue after that.

"It got so Elizabeth knew my schedules and expected me between flights. Once in a while if there was no one around we could whisper a few words to each other through the glass." Frank paused, then said, "As you know, gentlemen, we robots don't demand much out of activation. I think we could have been happy indefinitely with this simple relationship, except that something happened to spoil it. I'd pulled in from Vesta late one afternoon, got my pass as usual from the Robot Supervisor and gone over to Van Ness Avenue when I saw immediately that something was the matter with Elizabeth. Luckily it was getting dark and no one was around. Elizabeth was alone in the sales room going through her routine. We were able to whisper all we like through the glass. She told me she'd overheard the sales manager complaining about her low efficiency recently and that he intended to replace her with a newer model of another series. Both of us knew what that meant. Materials Reclamation--the junk pile."

Frank realized he'd have to act at once. He told the girl mech to go to the rear of the building and between them they managed to get a window open and Frank lifted her out into the alley.

"The seriousness of what I'd done jammed my thought-relays for a few minutes," admitted the big servo. "We panicked and ran through a lot of back streets until I gradually calmed down and started thinking clearly again. Leaving the city would be impossible. Police patrol jetabouts were cruising all around us in the main streets--they'd have picked up a male and female mech on sight. Besides, when you're on pass the company takes away your master fuse and substitutes a time fuse; if you don't get back on time, you deactivate and the police pick you up anyway. I began to see that there was only one way out if we wanted to stay together. It would mean taking big risks, but if we were lucky it might work. I explained the plan carefully to Elizabeth and we agreed to try it. The first step was to get back to the base in South San Francisco without being seen. Fortunately no one stopped us and we made the rocketport by 8:30. Elizabeth hid while I reported to the Super and traded in my time fuse for my master. Then I checked servo barracks; it was still early and I knew the other servos would all be in town. I had to work quickly. I brought Elizabeth inside and started dismantling her. Just as the other mechs began reporting back I'd managed to get all of her parts stowed away in my locker. The next day I went to San Francisco and brought back with me two rolls of lead foil. While the other servos were on pass I wrapped the parts carefully in it so the radioactivity from Elizabeth's pile wouldn't be picked up. The rest you know, gentlemen," murmured Frank in low, electrical tones. "Each time I made a trip I carried another piece of Elizabeth out here concealed in an

ordinary parts box. It took me nearly a year to accumulate all of her for an assembly."

When the big servo had finished he signed the statement Wynn had taken down in his notebook. I think even the two inspectors were a little moved by the story because Roberts said: "OK, Nineteen, you gave us a break, we'll give you one. Eight o'clock in the morning be ready to roll for Earth. Meanwhile you can stay here."

The next morning only the two inspectors and Frank Nineteen were standing by the airlock.

"Wait a minute," I said. "Aren't you taking the girl mech, too?"

"Not allowed to tamper with other companies' robots," Wynn said. "Nineteen gave us a signed confession so we don't need the girl as a witness. You'll have to contact her employers."

That same day Min got off a radargram to Earth explaining to the Atomovair people how a robot employee of theirs had turned up out here and what did they want us to do about it. The reply we received read: RATIONALOID DX78-947 "ELIZABETH" LOW EFFICIENCY WORKER. HAVE REPLACED. DISPOSE YOU SEE FIT. TRANSFER PAPERS FORWARDED EARLIEST IN COMPLIANCE WITH LAW.

"The poor thing," said Min. "She'll have a hard time getting another job. Robots have to have such good records."

"I tell you what," I said. " _We'll_ hire her. You could use some help with the housework."

So we put the girl mech right to work making the guests' beds and helping Min in the kitchen. I guess she was grateful for the job but when the work was done, and there wasn't anything for her to do, she just stood in front of a viewport with her slender plastic arms folded over her waist. Min and I knew she was re-running her memory tapes of Frank.

A week later the publicity started. Minor Planets must have let the story leak out somehow because when the mail rocket dropped off the Bay Area papers there was Frank's picture plastered all over page one with follow-up stories inside.

I read some of the headlines to Min: "Bare Love Nest in Space ... Mech Romeo Fired by Minor Planets ... Test Case Opens at Robot Court ... Electronics Experts Probe Robot Love Urge ..."

The Io wasn't mentioned, but later Minor Planets must have released the whole thing officially because a bunch of reporters and photographers rocketed out to interview us and snap a lot of pictures of Elizabeth. We worried for a while about how the publicity would affect our business relations with Minor Planets but nothing happened.

Back on Earth Frank Nineteen leaped into the public eye overnight. There was something about the story that appealed to people. At first it looked pretty bad for Frank. The State Prosecutor at Robot Court had his signed confession of theft and--what was worse--robot fraternization. But then, near the end of the trial, a young scientist named Scott introduced some new evidence and the case was remanded to the Sacramento Court of Appeals.

It was Scott's testimony that saved Frank from the junk pile. The big servo got off with only a light sentence for theft because the judge ruled that in the light of Scott's new findings robots came under human law and therefore no infraction of justice had been committed. Working independently in his own laboratory Scott had proved that the magnetic flux lines in male and female robot systems, while at first deteriorating to both, were actually behaving according to the para-emotional theories of von Bohler. Scott termed the condition 'hysteric puppy-love' which, he claimed, had many of the advantages of human love if allowed to develop freely. Well, neither Min nor I pretended we understood all his equations but they sure made a stir among the scientists.

Frank kept getting more and more publicity. First we heard he was serving his sentence in the mech correction center at La Jolla, then we got a report that he'd turned up in Hollywood. Later it came out that Galact-A-vision Pictures had hired Frank for a film and had gone \$10,000 bail for him. Not long after that he was getting billed all over Terra as the sensational first robot star.

All during the production of Forbidden Robot Love Frank remained lead copy for the newspapers. Reporters liked to write him up as the Valentino of the Robots. Frank Nineteen Fan Clubs, usually formed by lonely female robots against their employers' wishes, sprang up spontaneously through the East and Middle West. Then somebody found out Frank could sing and the human teen-agers began to go for him. It got so everywhere you looked and everything you read, there was Frank staring you in the face. Frank in tweeds on the golf course. Frank at Ciro's or the Brown Derby in evening clothes. Frank posing in his sports jetabout against a blue Pacific background.

Meanwhile everybody forgot about Elizabeth Seven. The movie producers had talked about hiring her as Frank's leading lady until they found out about a new line of female robots that had just gone on the market. When they screen-tested the whole series and picked a lovely Mylar rationaloid named Diana Twelve, it hit Elizabeth pretty hard. She began to let herself go after that and Min and I didn't have the heart to say anything to her. It was pretty obvious she wasn't oiling herself properly, her hair wasn't brushed and she didn't seem to care when one of her photons went dead.

When Forbidden Robot Love premiered simultaneously in Hollywood and New York the critics all gave it rave reviews. There were pictures of Diana Twelve and Frank making guest appearances all over the country. Back at the Io we got in the habit of letting Elizabeth watch TV with us

sometimes in the Renting Office and one night there happened to be an interview with Frank and Diana at the Sands Hotel in Las Vegas. I guess seeing the pretty robot starlet and her Frank sitting so close together in the nightclub must have made the girl mech feel pretty bad. Even then she didn't say a word against the big servo; she just never watched the set again after that.

When we tabbed up the Io's receipts that year they were so good Min and I decided to take a month off for an Earthside vacation. Min's retired brother in Berkeley was nice enough to come out and look after the place for us while we spent four solid weeks soaking up the sun in Southern California. When we got back out to the spotel, though, I could see there was something wrong by the look on Jim's face.

"It's that girl robot of yours, Bill," he said. "She's gone and deactivated herself."

We went right to 22A and found Elizabeth Seven stretched out on the floor. There was a screwdriver clutched in her hand and the relay banks in her side were exposed and horribly blackened.

"Crazy mech shorted out her own DX," Jim said.

Min and I knew why. After Jim left for Earth we dismantled Elizabeth the best we could and put her back in Frank's old locker. We didn't know what else to do with her.

Anyway, the slack season came and went and before long we were doing the spring cleaning again and wondering how heavy the Jovian Moons trade was going to be. I remember I'd been making some repairs outside and was just hanging up my spacesuit in the Renting Office when I heard the radar announcing a ship.

It was the biggest Marvin 990 I'd ever seen that finally suctioned up to the boom and secured. I couldn't take my eyes off the ship. She was pretty near the last word in rockets and loaded with accessories. It took me a minute or two before I noticed all the faces looking out of the viewports.

"Min!" I whispered. "There's something funny about those faces. They look like--"

"Robots!" Min answered. "Bill, that 990 is full of mechs!"

Just as she said it a bulky figure in white space fatigues swung out of the hatch and hurried up the gangplank. Seconds later it burst through the airlock.

"Frank Nineteen!" we gasped together.

"Please, where is Elizabeth?" he hummed anxiously. "Is she all right? I have to know."

Frank stood perfectly still when I told him about Elizabeth's self-deactivation; then a pitiful shudder went through him and he covered his face with his big Neoprene hands.

"I was afraid of that," he said barely audibly. "Where--you haven't--?"

"No," I said. "She's where you always kept her."

With that the big servo-pilot took off for 22A like a berserk robot and we were right behind him. We watched him tear open his old locker and gently lay out the girl's mech's parts so he could study them. After a minute or two he gave a long sigh and said, "Fortunately it's not as bad as I thought. I believe I can fix her." Frank worked hard over the blackened relays for twenty minutes, then he set the unit aside and began assembling the girl. When the final connections were made and the damaged unit installed he flicked on her power. We waited and nothing happened. Five minutes went by. Ten. Slowly the big robot turned away, his broad shoulders drooping slightly.

"I've failed," he said quietly. "Her DX doesn't respond to the gain."

The girl mech, in her blue dress, lay there motionless where Frank had been working on her as the servo-pilot muttered over and over, "It's my fault, I did this to you."

Then Min shouted: "Wait! I heard something!"

There was a slow click of a relay--and movement. Painfully Elizabeth Seven rose on one elbow and looked around her.

"Frank, darling," she murmured, shaking her head. "I know you're just old memory tape. It's all I have left."

"Elizabeth, it's really me! I've come to take you away. We're going to be together from now on."

"_You_ , Frank? This isn't just old feedback? You've come back to me?"

"Forever, darling. Elizabeth, do you remember what I said about those wonderful green little worlds, the asteroids? Darling, we're _going_ to one of them! You and the others will love Alinda, I know you will. I've been there many times."

"Frank, is your DX all right? What _are_ you talking about?"

"How stupid of me, darling--you haven't heard. Elizabeth, thanks to Dr. Scott, Congress has passed Robot Civil Rights! And that movie I made helped swing public opinion to our side. We're free!"

"The minute I heard the news I applied to Interplanetary for homestead rights on Alinda. I made arrangements to buy a ship with the money I'd earned and then I put ads in all the Robot Wanted columns for volunteer colonizers. You should have seen the response! We've got thirty robot

couples aboard now and more coming later. Darling, we're the first pioneer wave of free robots. On board we have tons of supplies and parts--everything we need for building a sound robot culture."

"Frank Nineteen!" said the girl mech suddenly. "I should be furious with you. You and that Diana Twelve--I thought--"

The big servo gave a flat whirring laugh. "Diana and me? But that was all publicity, darling. Why, right at the start of the filming Diana fell in love with Sam Seventeen, one of the other actors. They're on board now."

"Robot civilization," murmured the girl after a minute. "Oh, Frank, that means robot government, robot art, robot science ..."

"And robot marriage," hummed Frank softly. "There has to be robot law, too. I've thought it all out. As skipper of the first robot-owned rocket, I'm entitled to marry couples in deep space at their request."

"But who marries us, darling? You can't do it yourself."

"I thought of that, too," said Frank, turning to me. "This human gentleman has every right to marry us. He's in command of a moving body in space just like the captain of a ship. It's perfectly legal, I looked it up in the Articles of Space. Will you do it, sir?"

Well, what could I say when Frank dug into his fatigues and handed me a Gideon prayer book marked at the marriage service?

Elizabeth and Frank said their I do's right there in the Renting Office while the other robot colonizers looked on. Maybe it was the way I read the service. Maybe I should have been a preacher, I don't know. Anyway, when I pronounced Elizabeth and Frank robot and wife, that whole bunch of lovesick mechs wanted me to do the job for them, too. Big copper work robots, small aluminum sales-girl mechs, plastoid clerks and typists, squatty little Mumetal lab servos, rationaloids, non-rationaloids and just plain sub-robots--all sizes and shapes. They all wanted individual ceremonies, too. It took till noon the next day before the last couple was hitched and the 990 left for Alinda.

Like I said, the spotel business isn't so different from the motel game back in California. Sure, you got improvements to make but a new sideline can get to be pretty profitable--if you get in on the ground floor.

Min and I got to thinking of all those robot colonizers who'd be coming out here. Interplanetary cleared the license just last week. Min framed it herself and hung it next to our orbit license in the Renting Office. She says a lot of motel owners do all right as Justices of the Peace.

Transcriber's Note:

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